

Jordan Times

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Italian overpowered after hijacking

ROME (R) — Police overpowered a 67-year-old Sicilian pensioner on Monday after he held 160 people hostage on a plane at Rome airport. The man, Giuseppe Cizio, had been lured onto the ground to meet with a delegation of airport officials and police officers. A police commander, having offered to help the hijacker with documents which were weighing him down, overpowered him and prevented him from detonating the rudimentary device with his thumb. Mr. Cizio said, Mr. Cizio's plastic bag was found to contain a bizarre mixture of plasticine, gunpowder from fireworks, aluminium filings, a flat 4.5 volt battery, a shotgun cartridge and a lamp switch. Mr. Cizio held the 154 passengers and six crew for more than two hours after the scheduled flight by a DC-9 aircraft of the domestic carrier Meridiana arrived at Rome's Fiumicino airport from Palermo. He had asked to speak to the press and police officials, airport and the justice ministry to publicise persecution he claimed to have suffered from the courts.

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King, Qaboos review Arab ties, Yemen and peace

SALALAH, Oman (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein and Sultan Qaboos Bin Sa'eed Monday held a round of talks shortly after King Hussein's arrival on a three-day visit and exchanged views on Arab and international issues as well as bilateral relations.

King Hussein and Sultan Qaboos also held a closed-door meeting.

Upon his arrival, King Hussein was received by Sultan Qaboos, Deputy Prime Minister Qais Ben Abdul Munem Al Zawawi and Senior Omani officials along with Omani Ambassadors to Jordan Mohammad Al Bon Sa'eed and Jordan's Ambassador to Oman Samir Al-Humoud.

King Hussein is accompanied on the visit by an official delegation comprising their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Bin Al Hussein and Prince Hamzah Bin Al Hussein, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, advisors Marwan Al Qassem, Khalid Al Karaki and Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan, Royal Court Imam Ahmad Helayel and other senior officials.

King Hussein, who will also visit Qatar on Wednesday, was

seen off at Amman airport by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Upper House Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, Lower House Speaker Taher Al Masri, the King's advisors, and other senior officials.

Prince Mohammad was sworn in as Regent before King Hussein's departure.

The King's visit to Oman and Qatar comes two weeks after Saudi Arabia indicated it was not yet ready to improve relations and help pave the way for broader pan-Arab reconciliation.

King Hussein returned from Saudi Arabia after performing a minor pilgrimage but failing to meet King Fahd to thaw icy ties.

Jordanian and Qatari officials termed as landmark the King's visit to Doha, his first since the Gulf crisis, sparked by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, harmed bilateral ties.

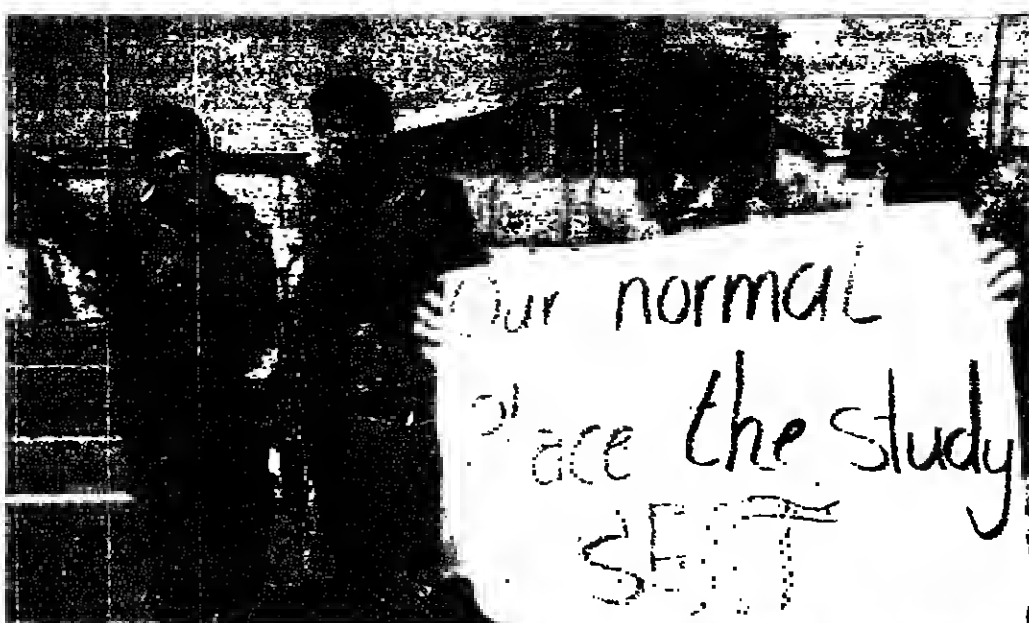
It comes at the invitation of Qatar's ruler, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani, and follows a spate of top-level visits that helped restore ties to their pre-crisis level of

strength. "We attach great importance to King Hussein's visit and hope it will further consolidate brotherly ties in the political, economic and trade fields and help restore Arab solidarity," Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Al Thani told Jordan Television Sunday.

"We in Qatar are seeking along with our brothers in Jordan and other Arab countries to revive solidarity to a minimum acceptable level... the present status quo is only serving the enemies of the Arab Nation."

Jordanian officials said King Hussein and Sultan Qaboos would evaluate joint efforts to end a nine-month-old crisis threatening to tear Yemen apart to determine whether they should carry on their attempts.

Both countries are members in a military commission seeking to disengage the armies of North and South Yemen which have not merged since the 1990 unity between the two halves. Yemen's bickering leaders signed a reconciliation accord in Amman last month, but the pact has failed to resolve the crisis.



A young Palestinian displays a banner during a demonstration demanding the lifting of an Israeli curfew and free access to the occupied West Bank so that Palestinians could attend classes (AFP photo)

Israeli troops kill blind Gazan; Rabin knew of Hebron tension

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — A blind Palestinian university student died Monday from gunshot wounds he sustained in a gunfight between Israeli troops and Palestinians, hospital officials said.

Also Monday, three Palestinian boys were seriously wounded in clashes with Israeli soldiers in the West Bank, hospital officials and U.N. personnel said.

Ahmad Aleiwa was in a taxi on his way to class at Gaza City's Islamic University when he was hit in the head by a bullet during a clash between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians on Sunday. He died of his wounds Monday, officials at Soroka Hospital in Beersheba said.

In the West Bank town of Kalkilya, at least eight Palestinian youths were shot and injured in clashes with Israeli soldiers. Palestinian reporters said students threw stones and bottles at Israeli soldiers who fired

tear gas and rubber bullets.

Officials at a United Nations clinic said six students were treated at the clinic and two other students were transferred to Mukdass Hospital in Jerusalem because they were seriously wounded.

Mukdass officials identified the two as Tareq Abu Mariam, 13, who was hit in the head with a rubber-coated metal bullet and Abdullah Abu Qamar, 12, who was hit in the stomach with a rubber bullet. Both were in stable condition.

There have been almost daily clashes between youths and the army in the occupied territories since Feb. 25, when an Israeli settler shot dead dozens of Palestinian worshippers in a Hebron mosque.

Monday's death raised the number of Palestinians killed since the massacre to 68 Palestinians. Two Israelis have also died in the violence.

In Beit Jalla, Israeli troops shot and wounded three Palestinian students.

Salim Zeidan, secretary of the Hope Secondary School, said he saw a commotion outside before classes were to start in which soldiers shot live ammunition in the air. Students rushed into the school. "Then either one or two snipers shot directly at the school's main (glass) door," he said.

About 15 rounds were fired, breaking windows and wounding three students," Mr. Zeidan said.

Headmaster Solomon Nour said he took the three — a girl aged 16 and two boys aged 15 and 17 — to hospital for treatment of light wounds from rubber bullets.

Probe continues

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin learned about provocations against Muslims in Hebron last October and

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58-year-old man said to confess to sodomising and killing 8-year-old

By Rana Hussein

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 58-year-old man confessed to the brutal murder of an eight-year-old boy after a sexual assault, Zarqa police announced Monday.

Brigadier-General Abdul Kader Ouran, director of Zarqa police, identified the man only as M.A.T., a truck driver, and said he had confessed to murdering the boy after sodomising him.

The man was married five times, divorced one of his wives, and deserted two, Brig. Ouran told a press conference.

The suspect said he sodomised the boy and three girls, he said.

The suspect told police he asked Lo'ai S. Oraiqat, the eldest son of a neighbour, to accompany him for a drive. The suspect took the boy to Al Quoneih area, 30 kilometres from Zarqa, and raped him, police said, quoting his confession.

The boy started bleeding and the suspect said he tried to stop the bleeding but failed. The suspect said he had no other choice but to kill the boy to hide his crime, police said.

The suspect said he sodomised the head of the boy and other parts of his body by using a sharp weapon.

Lo'ai's decomposing body was found dumped near a pile of stones in Al Quoneih area on March 15, two days after he was killed.

The child, the only son of the family, was reported missing on March 13 after he failed to return home after playing with his friends near his house.

The mother of the child told the Jordan Times that the suspect, "Abu Ziad" was

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U.S. to send Patriots to S. Korea

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton said Monday that the United States would send Patriot missiles to South Korea as a "purely defensive" measure because of the increasingly tense relationship with North Korea. Mr. Clinton spoke shortly after the South Korean government agreed at an emergency national security meeting to deploy the air defense missiles and to revive plans for military exercises with the United States (see page 8). "We have agreed that it is our national interest and in the interest of the security of the people of South Korea and the security of our armed forces there to send Patriot missiles at this time and we are going to do that," Mr. Clinton told reporters as he arrived in Florida for a health care meeting. Mr. Clinton described the deployment as "purely defensive in nature." He said the American commander in South Korea had requested the Patriots as part of a "continued modernisation of our armed forces." North Korea has threatened to pull out of an international nuclear control treaty over the issue of international inspections of its nuclear facilities.

Ben Ali reelected with 99% vote

TUNIS (Agencies) — Tunisian President Zine Abidine Ben Ali and the ruling party made a clean sweep in Sunday's presidential and parliamentary elections, the interior ministry said on Monday.

But opposition parties secured enough votes to enter parliament for the first time since independence from France in 1956.

Incumbent President Ben Ali, the only candidate in the presidential poll, won more than 99 per cent of votes east in the 25 electoral districts.

In the parliamentary polls Mr. Ben Ali's party, the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Democratique, won all 144 seats in the 25 districts with between 94 and 99 per cent of votes cast.

The six opposition parties each won around one per cent of the vote but due to a change in the electoral law they will receive 19 seats between them based on their share of the vote.

The turnout ranged between 88 and 98 per cent of the electorate, the Interior Ministry said.

In all, 163 seats in the single-chamber parliament were at stake, with at least 19 guaranteed to opposition parties no matter how badly they fared. It will mark the first time more than one party has been represented in parliament since Tunisia's independence in 1956.

Mr. Ben Ali, 57, seized power in 1987 from President Habib Bourguiba, who was said to be senile. In 1989, Mr. Ben Ali won his first five-year mandate with 99 per cent of the vote, running unopposed.

Moncef Marzouki, a doctor and human rights activist, tried to run against Mr. Ben Ali this year, but was unable to get the required 30 endorsements from legislators or city council members, virtually all of them part of the ruling party.

The main opposition to Mr. Ben Ali in the 1989 voting came from Muslim fundamentalists, but their parties later were banned by Tunisian authorities, who have justified limits on political expression by citing the free elections in

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Parliament concludes regular session today

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's 12th Parliament ends its first regular session today, with expectations high that it would be recalled for an extraordinary session next month to formalise several pieces of legislation that the government has forwarded to it as emergency laws.

Official media reported that a Royal decree was issued Monday ending the regular session, which began in late November.

In the meantime, the Lower House continued deliberations Monday to complete work on a draft law on municipal councils.

At the end of the day's session, the lawmakers were short of endorsing a lone controversial article before adopting it.

Article 25, the last item in the draft law, gives the government the right to set the amount of municipal taxes.

Duties objected to the clause, saying it contradicted the spirit of decentralisation of authority that they had been trying to achieve.

After a heated debate, they agreed to defer the debate until after the government presents a detailed list of proposed municipal taxes today.

Articles in the draft law already endorsed by the House call for the disbandment of all municipal councils, including the Greater Amman municipal

council, on Dec. 31, 1994, and elections to be held for new councils on a single day in the first half of 1995.

The lawmakers endorsed 14 articles of the law with minor amendments on Monday. These are related to giving voters the right to contest in a court of law any decision of any member of a municipal council except the mayor of Amman who is appointed by the government.

Also on Monday, the House unanimously approved a proposal made by Deputy Samir Habashneh to form a parliamentary delegation to visit "understanding" countries to explain the "suffering of Iraqis" in view of the U.N. Security Council's recent decision to maintain the 43-month-old international sanctions against Iraq.

Mr. Habashneh (Karak) noted that U.N. inspectors have reported that Iraq had complied with the Security Council conditions for lifting the sanctions and referred to the futile efforts last week by countries such as France, China, Russia, Turkey and Iran to issue a Security Council statement acknowledging Iraq's cooperation with the U.N. Special Commission charged with eliminating its weapons of mass destruction.

It was not immediately known when the House would form a delegation to lobby on

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Israel, PLO far from accord on key issues

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israeli negotiators resumed discussions Monday in an effort to find enough common ground for a formal resumption of peace talks, but they seemed far from agreement on key issues.

The Israelis met with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat Friday Sunday night before they opened discussions with their PLO counterparts the next morning.

They are trying to end the deadlock in the peace process caused by the Feb. 25 massacre of Palestinian worshippers in Hebron.

An Israeli delegate said they had "good introductory talks" with Mr. Arafat and other PLO officials immediately after they arrived Sunday night. "Everything was fine," said Jacques Neriah, adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and one of the negotiators. He refused to give more details.

But Samir Ghosheh, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, said the Israelis "brought nothing new and they are only procrastinating."

He said among the proposals

that were rejected by the PLO was a deployment of Red Cross observers in Hebron instead of the armed international peacekeeping force the PLO demands.

Mr. Ghosheh said the Israelis also brought "on serious proposal" on the Jewish settlers in Hebron. The PLO wants them to be removed to outside the city.

The PLO is seeking an Israeli pledge to withdraw quickly from Gaza and Jericho and immediately transfer powers to the Palestinians in line with the Sept. 13 self-rule accord.

A spokesman for Mr. Arafat, Marwan Kanafani, said there had been no progress so far in talks with the Israelis. He said the PLO rejected an Israeli proposal for the deployment of a Palestinian police force in Hebron as a substitute for international peacekeepers.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Monday it was too early to give a prognosis on the talks.

Cabinet ministers continue to voice approval for moving the Hebron settlers, or at least consolidating them into one

two place, down from their current six dwellings.

"Very soon we will have to decide, because without evacuating all the settlements in Hebron, a fire will start there that will destroy all of Israel," Environment Minister Yossi Sarid told a cabinet meeting Sunday, according to press reports.

Rabbi Moshe Levinger, leader of the settlement movement, said on Israel Radio that he doubted the government could muster a parliament or popular majority for dismantling Hebron.

"The political reality does not show that they (Palestinians) will find Hebron enough, or even East Jerusalem, they want it all," said Levinger.

Israeli officials stressed that the decision would come through a consensus in the government and not in bargaining over PLO demands that Israel remove the settlers before talks on implementing the September autonomy plan proceed. The PLO refused to return to the talks after Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein killed

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Amnesty gives a mixed review of Jordan's record Article 19 report criticises Press and Publications Law

By Sama Atiyeh

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "It has been 16 years, and I have been waiting for death every minute, every hour and every day throughout these 16 long years... if it appears to you that there is one per cent (of truth) in the charge (against me), I want you to carry out the sentence immediately and without hesitation."

These words were sent in a letter to the prime minister in 1992 by Mohammad Abu Zinah, who was sentenced to death on Dec. 7, 1976 by the martial law court.

The death penalty in Jordan dominated much of Amnesty International's (AI) human rights report, on the country's recent human rights record. In a 20-page report, entitled Jordan — Human Rights Reforms: Achievements and Obstacles to be presented during the U.N. Human Rights Committee meeting in New York today and tomorrow, AI gave credit to the Kingdom's achievements towards reforms.

But it was also very critical of what it viewed as violations of human rights, particularly in the high number of executions last year and legislation curb-

ing freedoms. It listed 10 recommendations urging Jordan to urgently adopt and "implement fully international human rights standards," and called on sectors of civil society, such as the professional associations, to play an active role in ensuring further reform and their implementation.

Officials either could not be reached for comment or declined to comment before reading the report.

But Jordanian human rights activists and analysts, though expressing alarm at the high number of executions — 12 — in 1993 described the general report as "good because it sets high standards for Jordan to follow."

AI urged Jordan to review legislation to reduce the number of capital offences "with a view to abolishing the death penalty," and called on the government to "re-examine the commutation of all death sentences pending a full review of the death penalty and its future abolishing."

"AI appeals to (His Majesty) King Hussein to exercise clemency in all cases," the organisation said. It welcomed the King's previous commutations of death sentences and amnesties granted to political prisoners, except those convicted of spying, which the organisation considers as politically-oriented.

According to AI's report, the

number of prisoners awaiting execution is not known. But it said that in addition to Mr. Abu Zinah, another prisoner, Uthman Subhi, has been awaiting his execution since he was convicted of spying in June 1976.

The London-based AI reported that prisoners on death row are not told when their execution will take place until 15 minutes before they are hanged, usually at dawn at the Swaga prison south of Amman.

The families of prisoners condemned to death are not told of the executions until afterwards, the report added.

"This practice has been justified as an attempt to reduce the suffering accompanying executions," the international human rights watchdog said.

This justification found agreement among analysts. A seasoned Jordanian analyst, who read the report, told the Jordan Times that "it would be difficult to tell someone he will die at a certain date, or to summon his mother to bid her son farewell before he dies."

Saying that the number of executions in Jordan in 1993 was the highest annual number recorded in the Kingdom by AI in two decades, the organisation, which strongly rejects the death penalty, said it "deeply regrets that a trend suggesting a decline in the use of the death penalty was reversed in 1993 with a sharp increase in the number of executions."

The report noted that 10 of those executed last year were convicted of murder by ordinary courts,

while two were hanged for spying for Israel by the State Security Court and had no right to appeal, since that right was not introduced until later that year.

AI, which also recorded two executions in January this year, said that Jordan witnessed four executions in 1990, seven in 1991 and none in 1992.

"The Jordanian authorities have argued that the death penalty is a sanction required by society and Islamic law," AI said. "Without holding any views on Islam or other religions, AI opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the fundamental right to life."

A former official and close observer of human rights who preferred anonymity said that Jordan would never abolish the death penalty.

"It is impossible to abolish capital punishment in Jordan or in any other Islamic country since this punishment is an important part of Islamic Sharia," the former official said.

The source added that laws are made to conform with the mentality of a certain society, and that the general public was not sympathetic to "brutal murderers and spies," adding that human rights organisations should take this into consideration.

While AI was critical of legislation hindering protection of freedoms and human rights, the organisation welcomed Jordan's moves towards reform since November 1989 with the first free parliament

ary elections in more than 25 years. It welcomed the revoking of a 1953 law against communism and the abolishment of the 1935 Defence Law and the 1967 martial law.

The organisation also welcomed Jordan's introduction of political parties, the Kingdom's establishment of the Centre for Studies on Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights in the Arab World, and its abandonment of curbing the confiscation of passports and restrictions on employment.

AI also welcomed Jordan's ratification of the rights of the child and the convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

"AI welcomes the progress in human rights reforms since 1989 and appreciates access it was given throughout the period by Jordanian authorities at all levels, including the General Intelligence Department (GID) and military judiciary," the report stated.

"However, it believes that important human rights safeguards are still missing and should urgently be introduced to bring Jordan more fully into compliance with the international standards to which it is a state party," the organisation added.

In a close scrutiny of legislation that it believes curbs freedoms and protection of human rights, AI expressed concern over the 1992 Defence Law, which replaced the

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Article 19 report criticises Press and Publications Law

By Sa'eda Kilani

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Legal and institutional reforms in Jordan have produced the first multi-party parliamentary elections in 1993, but have failed to secure the free and open press necessary for enduring democracy, the London-based Article 19, the International Centre Against Censorship, charged yesterday.

"The law has proved to be a grave disappointment to journalists and human rights activists who had campaigned for a free and open press," the report said.

The report, entitled Jordan: Democratisation Without Press Freedom, was submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Committee (HRC) that today reviews Jordan's human rights records at U.N. headquarters in New York.

The committee will discuss the government's report taking into consideration other reports submitted by human rights organisations such as Article 19 and Amnesty International (see separate story). It will base its conclusions re-

garding the human rights situation in Jordan on the extent to which Jordan conforms with its obligations under the international covenant on civil and political rights.

A government report was submitted to the U.N. committee on May 26, 1992 was not distributed to the media nor to human rights organisations in Jordan. The Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR) Jordan branch had submitted a request earlier this year to obtain a copy but received no answer, an AOHR official told the Jordan Times.

The two reports, the government's and Article 19's, show considerable contradiction in matters pertaining to freedom of the press.

Article 19's report criticised the Press and Publications Law, enacted in May 1993, because "it still provides for licensing of journalists and publications, and prior censorship of books and imported publications."

The government's report, a copy of which was obtained by the Jordan Times, showed full respect to freedom of the press as stipulated by Article 19 of

the universal declaration of human rights which states that: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers."

Jordan's report to the HRC states that: "Freedom of opinion and expression are regarded as inalienable rights of the human person, and personal liberty is safeguarded by the Constitution. The state guarantees freedom of opinion and every Jordanian is free to express his (her) opinion orally, in writing, pictorially or through any other form of expression permitted by law."

In its 25-page report, Article 19 presented a full review of the country's different press institutions, and analysed what it considered basic violations of freedom of expression.

In the first section it tackles the licensing of publications according to the Press and Publications Law (PPL) and criticises the enforcement of a

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Amnesty gives mixed review

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old one, and the Press and Publications Law.

Although AI said that the new Defence Law was an improvement over the previous one, it criticised a number of articles, such as Article 4, which gives the prime minister the authority to "place restrictions on people's freedom of assembly, movement and residence, and arrest and detain suspects or those endangering national security and public order."

While the organisation noted that Article 8 allows those subjected to administrative detention to appeal against detention before the high court of justice and to rule on the appeal promptly, it said it was concerned that the law "will provide for administrative detention without charge or trial of security suspects and sets no time limits on the duration of detention orders."

The organisation also expressed concern over limitations in the Press and Publications Law that curb freedom of expression and opinion, such as what could be published, having to be a member of the Jordan Press Association to practice journalism, the ban on publishing details of ongoing security trials and the disclosing of confidential sources "in the course of criminal proceedings in order to protect state security, prevent a crime or achieve justice," (see separate story).

AI reported that three journalists from the left-wing Al Ahsan weekly, including its Chief Editor Jamil Nimri, were currently on trial for defaming the State Security Court and defaming Parliament.

"AI is concerned that current Jordanian legislation may be used to restrict the right to freedom of opinion and expression as guaranteed by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and lead to the imprisonment of prisoners of conscience," the report added.

The organisation urged Jordan to review all legislation regarding freedom of news media and should be "closely monitored to prevent the imprisonment of prisoners of conscience."

The former official, who spoke to the Jordan Times, disagreed with AI's proposals to amend any legislation at this time, contending that Jordanians, be they citizens, officials or parliamentarians, should "not understand democracy 100 per cent."

"I agree that some of these laws have gaps," the former official said. "But if these laws are repeated now for amendments, they would be amended to the worse, since there are strong elements who want to curb the freedoms available in the current legislation."

He insisted that the existing laws were sufficient for the time being, and needed to be "absorbed" before attempting to improve them several years from now.

"The problem is not the laws,

but the practice, and more time has to be given to these laws to be properly implemented first," the source added.

Meanwhile, AI also reported that while it received fewer allegations than previously of torture and ill-treatment at the GID, detainees have occasionally complained of being subjected to "generalised beatings and floggings (beatings on the soles of the feet)," during detention.

The organisation expressed concern over prolonged incommunicado detentions at the GID with no access to lawyers, doctors or their choice of judges until the interrogation is finished, and sometimes, a confession is taken.

Reporting that over 800 detainees have been held at the GID since January 1992 on security grounds, AI urged Jordan to abide by Article 12 of the convention against torture to "conduct a prompt and impartial investigation of complaints of torture applied to all competent authorities, including prosecutors and courts."

AI, however, welcomed the existence of orders issued to all military personnel by former commander of the Armed Forces and current chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker forbidding the use of violence against prisoners. It also welcomed the regular visits by the International Red Cross twice a month to the GID prison, as well as the introduction of regular medical examinations for detainees in custody.

But the organisation insisted that these moves were insufficient and insisted on allowing prisoners access to lawyers, judges and doctors of their choice.

AI recommended that fuller protection of detainees against torture and ill-treatment, as well as protection of authorities against false accusations or such abuse, would be the "separation of the security functions of custody and interrogations."

"The agency responsible for the custody of detainees should therefore be different from the GID, which is engaged in interrogating them," AI stressed. "At the very least the supervision of the GID detention centre should be carried out effectively by officials other than the GID officers themselves."

A senior official, however, said recently that the Cabinet has recently formed a special committee, after a parliamentary inquiry into the treatment of prisoners and detainees, to pay regular visits to prison facilities, including the GID.

A founding member of the Centre for Studies on Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights in the Arab World told the Jordan Times that the centre will act as a protector of citizens, legal and human rights.

The centre, whose laws are currently being studied by the legislative council, will monitor and investigate the treatment of prisoners and detainees, the member said. "It will also refer cases to the prosecution against anyone responsible for alleged torture

against prisoners, ensure prompt access to lawyers and independent doctors, and to monitor the activities of different security apparatus to ensure that the legal and human rights of individuals are protected."

The human rights activist also insisted that non-governmental organisations should be active in monitoring the treatment of prisoners and detainees.

Although AI welcomed the right of appeal at the Court of Cassation for anyone convicted by the State Security Court, it criticised the military court because it is appointed by the executive authority.

Although the amended 1993 version of the State Security Law allows the prime minister to establish such courts "in special circumstances required by the public interest" composed of three civilian and two military judges, AI said that all trials of political and political-violence related cases have been conducted in courts composed of three military judges.

AI called for the abolishment of the State Security Court and all "exceptional" courts to allow the ordinary judiciary to "recover fully criminal jurisdiction."

"Without questioning the qualifications or the personal integrity of any military judge, AI believes that a court appointed by the executive authorities on an ad hoc basis cannot appear to provide the same guarantees of independence and impartiality provided by the regular courts," the organisation said.

Among the 10 recommendations AI has listed as "priorities for urgent reform," the organisation urged Jordanian authorities to provide effective protection for asylum seekers and not to expel them to a country where they would risk human rights violations.

AI reported that at least four detainees were expelled from Jordan to 1993 to countries which were expected to persecute them. One Palestinian with a Jordanian passport was reportedly handed over to the Israeli authorities at the King Hussein Bridge last July and was allegedly tortured while in Israeli custody, AI said, adding that he was currently on trial for involvement in bomb attacks in Israel in 1985 attributed to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The then information minister, Maan Abu Nowar, denied at that time that such a deportation had taken place.

AI also reported that three Sudanese Christians were expelled and returned to Khartoum last November after leaving their country due to the civil war. Their fate is unknown.

The human rights activist said that the Jordanian Constitution clearly stipulates that "no Jordanian citizen can be deported," and that "those given political asylum will not be extradited because of their political beliefs or for defending freedom."

Israeli bombing kills schoolgirl after 2 soldiers slain in Lebanon

NABATTIYEH (Agencies) — Israeli artillery pounded southern Lebanon Monday, showering a school bus with shrapnel that killed a 12-year-old girl and wounded 22 other children, security sources said.

The shelling was in retaliation for resistance bombings earlier in the day that killed two Israeli soldiers and two allied militiamen.

In addition to the schoolchildren, three other civilians were wounded in the Israeli response to the bombings, which also wounded five pro-Israeli militiamen. The bombings were claimed by the Hizbollah group.

The market town of Nabatiyyeh and surrounding villages took the brunt of the Israeli bombardment and, for the first time in eight months, the port city of Sidon, provincial capital of South Lebanon, was hit.

It was the most widespread

Israeli bombardment since a week-long ground, air and naval blitz of South Lebanon in July that killed 147 people and injured 500, most of them Lebanese.

The two Israeli soldiers were killed in a roadside bomb explosion against an armour patrol between the villages of Aishiyeh and Rihan at the eastern sector of an Israeli-held border enclave.

A militiaman of the Israeli-affiliated South Lebanon Army (SLA) was killed in another roadside bomb blast near the village of Arab Salim in the central sector of the enclave Israel calls a "security zone."

Two other SLA militiamen were wounded in the attack at Arab Salim, eight kilometres north of Nabatiyyeh, the biggest Lebanese town facing the "security zone."

The pro-Iranian Hizbollah

claimed responsibility for the attack, saying five Israeli soldiers were killed or wounded in the ambush.

Shortly after the ambush, Israel sent an artillery battery of five 155-millimetre guns into the zone to beef up its firepower, sources said.

The Israeli casualties were the first since Hizbollah guerrillas killed four and wounded five in a Feb. 7 ambush.

The schoolgirl was killed when one of about 70 heavy artillery shells landed near a school bus in Nabatiyyeh.

The sources said 22 other schoolchildren, most aged between four and 10, were wounded. A civilian man was also wounded in the shelling of Nabatiyyeh.

A Reuters photographer said he saw eight wounded children at the town's hospital.

Middle East should educate against AIDS, WHO says

KUWAIT (R) — The Middle East should start to devote some of its considerable wealth to educating its people — especially women and the young — about AIDS prevention, a U.N. expert said on Monday.

Women and young people are especially important targets for AIDS education because global experience shows their access to power and information are limited, said Michael Merson of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Mr. Merson, the U.N. agency's top AIDS expert, told an AIDS conference that 75,000 people in the Middle East and North Africa had been infected by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

"Your HIV prevalence is still low which gives you a precious window of opportunity. Unlike many other regions, you also have rich resources to harness to AIDS prevention... for example by truly professional educational campaigns," he said.

Explicit AIDS awareness campaigns found in the West are unknown in the Middle East, where tradition restricts public discussion of sexual matters. But in recent years

media and health officials in some Arab states have started occasional programmes warning people about AIDS in general terms.

AIDS is a combination of illnesses which develop after HIV weakness a person's defences against disease. There is no known cure or vaccine for the disease which kills 100,000 people worldwide each year.

"Getting clear information to people requires a special effort in the case of population groups with lower literacy, such as women, and those with limited access to information, such as young people," Mr. Merson said.

"Perhaps the most important preventative measure is to make sure that people have the weapons to control their lives — for example, the power to refuse sex. Again, women and young people tend to have the least power to begin with and will require the most help."

Mr. Merson, executive director of the WHO's global programme on AIDS, said decision makers "have to understand that information about AIDS is a matter of life or death."

"Politicians and teachers may fear parental opposition to talking about sexuality in any public forum. But we have learned from experience that

people all over the world are willing to listen to candid messages once they understand that their lives, or the lives of their children, are at stake."

"When it comes to school education perhaps a separate course on AIDS is unthinkable. In that case incorporate the information into a course on health education or its equivalent. If the term 'sex education' is unacceptable, try 'family life' education."

Mr. Merson listed three steps not to take:

1. Do not believe AIDS cannot happen in your country — it is present in every country in the region.

2. Do not blame foreigners for the disease. "Its chance of spreading has to do with more the behaviour of the population, and not the entry into the country of a few more HIV infected people."

3. Do not mandatorily test for AIDS without people's informed consent. "Mandatory testing is a coercive measure... Prevention depends on a supportive environment, not a punitive, coercive one."

Like many other states in the region Kuwait tests all foreigners arriving to take up jobs for HIV infection. Those who test positive are immediately deported.

Israeli leaders refuse to meet Dalai Lama

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Dalai Lama made his first visit to Israel Sunday and was snubbed by the country's leaders, who, according to media reports, refused to meet him out of fear of angering China.

The exiled Tibetan leader, spiritual guide for millions of Buddhists, is spending five days in the country as guest of the Israeli Society for the Protection of Nature.

Asked by an Israeli reporter how he felt about not being received by a single leader, the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize laureate said, "It's no problem. I always make visits of this kind of nature, purely spiritual in nature."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's spokesman Gad Ben-Ari said Mr. Rabin was not meeting the Dalai Lama "because it's a private visit."

Ben-Ari refused to comment on Israeli radio and television reports that Israeli leaders were avoiding the religious leader who has spearheaded opposition to Chinese rule in Tibet, for fear of harming ties with Beijing.

It is unusual for the Jewish state to snub an international figure of the Dalai Lama's stature, particularly religious leaders.

But diplomatic ties with China, forged for the first time only in 1992, are considered of utmost importance, given Beijing's clout with the Arab World, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Also significant in ties with the Chinese are the huge market it has opened up for Israeli businessmen. There are also frequent reports of weapons deals made with the Chinese in recent years.

The Dalai Lama fled Tibet, a Himalayan mountain region in southwestern China, after a failed uprising in 1959 and heads a government-in-exile based in Dharmasala, India.

He was warmly received by Israelis at the Hebrew University, where he was named an honorary fellow on Sunday. About 200 fans gathered, including many former tourists to India, a popular travel site for Israelis.

Speaking partly in English, the Nobel laureate said that his people sought to "learn many things from the Jewish people, especially in confronting difficult times."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bombs kill 1, wound 12 in Turkey

ISTANBUL (R) — Bomb blasts ripped through the offices of a Muslim youth organisation and four other sites in Istanbul in pre-election violence, killing one person and wounding 12, police said on Monday. Unidentified assailants hurled a bomb at the offices of the pro-Muslim National Youth Foundation in suburban Pendik on Sunday night, killing one person and wounding 12. The attackers escaped. Bomb blasts also rocked offices of the pro-Muslim Welfare Party in suburban Esentepe and Avclar on Monday. No one was injured and there was minor damage. A bomb explosion shook the offices of a state insurance company in Sisi district on Sunday night, shattering windows and damaging furniture but no one was hurt. No one claimed responsibility for the attacks. Police arrested two people for tossing fire bombs at a municipal department store in the district of Besiktas on Monday. No one was injured. It wasn't immediately clear if the assailants were affiliated with any political group. Turkey holds nationwide municipal elections on March 27. The election campaign so far has been marred with attacks on several party offices and candidates.

2 dead in tanker fire in Arabian Sea

LONDON (R) — Two people were killed and 18 missing on Monday after an explosion and fire engulfed a tanker in the Arabian Sea between Oman and Bombay, Lloyds Shipping Service reported. Lloyds, monitored in London, said 17 people had been rescued alive, nine with burns, from the Liberian-owned tanker Stolidi. The vessel's superstructure had burnt out but the cargo was believed to be intact. Lloyds said the 138,765-tonne tanker was discovered on Monday morning by a Liberian-registered liquefied gas tanker Hill after an explosion sometime on Sunday. Two people had been found dead and 18 were missing. The Stolidi was still afloat and the fire thought to have died down, it said. A rescue operation including several vessels with medical teams were on their way to the scene. Lloyds did not say what cargo the stricken ship was carrying.

19 Pakistanis killed in UAE crash

ABU DHABI (AP) — Nineteen Pakistani workers were killed when their minibus collided with a fertiliser-laden truck on a foggy highway Sunday, officials and diplomats said. The crash occurred on the road between Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, a city in Abu Dhabi emirate. The bus driver was killed, while the driver of the truck survived and was hospitalised in intensive care, officials said. Zayed Saqr Hamdan, director of the Abu Dhabi traffic and licensing department, blamed the accident on reckless driving.

Tunis turns away Israeli delegates' jet

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel state television said on Sunday Tunisian authorities turned away an aircraft carrying Israeli delegates to a meeting with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials in Tunis. The Israeli executive plane was diverted to Sicily, where the delegates boarded a U.S. military jet for the flight to Tunis, the television said in an uncorroborated report. Israeli foreign ministry spokesman Uri Palti said he knew nothing about the reported diversion. "Tunisian officials did not allow the small Israeli plane carrying the delegates to land in Tunis and it was forced to land in Fontana-Rossa airport in Sicily," the television said. It gave no details of why the Israeli aircraft was turned away.

France gives \$3.45m in aid to Djibouti

DIJBOUTI (R) — France has given 20 million francs (\$3.45 million) in emergency aid to its former Red Sea colony of Djibouti drained by a two-year-old war with northern rebels. French Minister for Cooperation Michel Roussin announced the emergency allocation in Djibouti on Saturday and promised a substantial amount of humanitarian aid because of drought. "There is a genuine willingness to move towards national reconciliation," Mr. Roussin said in a brief reference to the war with the rebel Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD). FRUD launched an Afar rebellion against the predominantly ethnic Somali government in Djibouti in late 1991. The tiny state at the entrance to the Red Sea gained independence from France in 1977. Mr. Roussin said France was willing if requested to mediate to bring conflicting viewpoints and would assist efforts to reduce the size of the Djibouti army, swollen to 15,000 because of the rebellion in the north compared with 5,000 in peacetime. Mr. Roussin, the first French minister in four years to attend a meeting of a joint commission to review cooperation, signed an agreement for technical assistance for the port of Djibouti.

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT
Jordanian-Syrian Land Transport Co.

INVITES

Contractors to participate in tender No. 3/94 for supply of spare parts for its Mercedes trucks type (L&LS 2624) as per parts numbers and quantities attached with terms of tender.

Contractors wishing to bid for tender can obtain copies of tender documents from the company Al Qastal — Queen Alia Intl. Airport, Amman for a non-refundable fee of JD 120,000 (one hundred and twenty Jordanian dinars) per copy bearing official documents proving their registration in records of trading agents or brokers. Offers should be submitted not later than 2:30 p.m. (Jordan local time) on Monday the 25th of April/1994.

Chairman General Manager

Article 19 criticises restrictions

(Continued from page 1)

"heavy capital investment" needed for licensing newspapers that reaches JD50,000 for a daily newspaper and JO15,000 for a periodical.

"Though several new publications have been authorised since the law came into force, many Jordanians are prevented from publishing because of the minimum capital investment requirements," the report said.

Dr. Sulaiman Sweiss, a member of the administrative committee at the Arab organisation for human rights-Jordan branch, in a report he prepared, points out that Article 5 of the PPL that forces journalists to reveal their sources in a court of law is "a sword pointed at the neck of the Jordanian journalist all the time. The newspaper deprives the journalist from the needed and adequate protection for his/her sources."

The government's report said: "In Jordan, the various information media transmit all forms of information and ideas without any restrictions."

On the restrictions imposed on journalists, Article 19's report criticised PPL's code of honour as

stipulated by its Article 9. "The proposed code is worth nothing because it gives a further insight into the government's view of the role of the media," it said.

The government's report said: "The media conscientiously endeavour to combat all forms of racial discrimination and carry full reports on the repression, torture, denial of legitimate rights and other inhuman practices to which persecuted minorities and peoples are subjected anywhere in the world."

Article 19's report said: "Since the PPL came into force journalists have been detained and charged with offences related to their writing. Newspaper editors have been harassed by the (former) minister of information and the (former) director of the Press and Publications Department through telephone calls, warning letters and threats of legal action."

The report also criticised the list of a series of restrictions imposed on journalists: "The law does not clearly define the nature of the information it classifies in the various categories. It does not recognise the principle of the public's right to know and prohibits publication of information which could harm the reputation of public officials, the public morale, or the

honour of the state."

The government's report said that freedom of opinion is safeguarded under the terms of legislation in force and described the Press and Publications Law as in keeping with the present stage of democratisation and freedom of political activity.

The United States State Department's annual human rights report covering 1993 pointed out that while the Constitution provides for freedom of speech and the press, the government continues to exercise limited censorship on the local media by pressuring news editors to change or omit coverage that the government finds embarrassing or contrary to what it perceives to be Jordan's interests.

In its conclusion, Article 19's report pointed to the restrictions imposed on the right to publish and the right of access to information. "The law also severely curtails the range of topics which journalists or writers may discuss and severely punishes infringements," it said.

"We hope that the government will present an amended draft law of the press and publications to be in conformity with international conventions and treaties that call for the protection of freedom of expression," Dr. Sweiss said.

Dr. Sweiss said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Friday Special Magazine
19:00	News in French
19:15	Le Monde Fantastique Des Animaux
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	The Respected Family
21:30	News in English
22:00	The Cape Rebel
22:50	Night Court
PRAYER TIMES	
04:18	Fajr
05:35	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:45	Dhuhr
15:10	'Asr
17:25	Maghreb
19:08	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swaidia, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624990	
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 632480	
De la Sade Church, Tel. 661757	
Transfiguration Church, Tel. 623266	
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 632480	
623541	
Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775611	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811395	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be partly cloudy with a chance of scattered showers and winds becoming northeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, partly cloudy weather conditions will prevail with winds northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	18 / 24
Aqaba	18 / 24
Deserts	7 / 18

Jordan Valley	14 / 23
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 17, Aqaba 25. Humidity readings: Amman 40 per cent, Aqaba 36 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Basim Qaddumi	648633
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad	846070
Dr. Fakhri Tayeh	858880
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayeh	620115
Fires pharmacy	661912
Al Ahsan pharmacy	670535
Najm pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Shamsi pharmacy	644945
Shamsi pharmacy	637660
Najm pharmacy	623672
Najm pharmacy	847652
IBRD:	
Dr. Ali Shuaibi	246140
Aqaba pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Walid Halseh	982799

Khalifah pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	172, 921111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	843402
Public Security Department	63021
Hotel Complaints	635800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Municipality	
Abdullah Telephone Repairs	623101
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	660100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	

16:45	Rome (AZ)
18:45	Paris, Beirut (AF)
19:45	Beirut (ME)
20:00	Aden (TY)
20:30	Bucharest (RO)
21:15	Amsterdam, Damascus (KL)
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)3320-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	

BRIEFING ON QAF WORK: Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday receives at her office a delegation of wives of U.S. senators which arrived in Amman Sunday on a four-day visit to Jordan. Princess Basma briefed members of the delegation on the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development's (QAF) goals, programmes and activities in offering services to children and women and its role in rural development. The group was also briefed on QAF's methods in offering services to targeted sectors of the society, particularly in training and preparing women to undertake an active role in the society. The delegation then visited an exhibition of rugs and other handicrafts held at QAF. The exhibition includes items produced by QAF's projects in Amman, Madaba and Ma'an. During the visit, the delegation, which arrived at an invitation by Princess Basma, will be introduced to Jordanian life and its main economic and social development issues. The delegation's itinerary includes visits to several projects established by QAF in needy urban areas across the country. In line with the interests of the delegation, a focus of these visits will be on QAF's educational and income-generating projects for women which include rug-weaving, food-processing, rural markets and revival of ancient pottery (Petra photo).



Mideast specialist cautions Arabs on Clinton administration

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Arabs should move quickly to resume the peace negotiations with Israel and hold them on course, said L. Carl Brown, a noted U.S. academic specialist on Middle Eastern affairs. But, he said, the Arabs should not be so willing to place their trust in the current U.S. government as a competent and trustworthy broker for the peace talks.

He told his audiences Monday at the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan and earlier at Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre that the notion that the different stages of the peace process should be initiated by U.S. government cues "is an extremely dangerous one."

"The Clinton administration is not a passive one," he told the Jordan Times in a brief interview.

"But it is domestically oriented and doesn't have the background and experience that the Bush administration had in foreign policy. It is also obviously pro-Israeli."

"It is to the advantage of all Middle East parties for the Clinton administration to be

less than centrally involved in the peace talks. Not this administration, nor any other U.S. presidency, should play so prominent a role in them."

He added, "don't count on the U.S. government lining up in the future on the side of a Palestinian state."

Addressing Arab fears that the U.S.'s abstentions in the U.N. Security Council vote on the Hebron massacre resolution signalled a change in its position on the status of East Jerusalem, he said he was relatively sure that no such change had occurred, but "if the Arabs insist on nailing down the U.S. position at this time, that would backfire. And a change might be inadvertently brought about."

"I want to stress the importance of the bilateral negotiations," Dr. Brown continued. "It is vital that they be continued and that they succeed. Both sides must realise the price of failure will be tremendous — the Labour Party would summarily lose the elections, and the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) would in all likelihood vanish as a political movement. Both sides are obliged to be allies."

"If Rabin really does not

want to give up the occupied territories, as is starting to appear, then the Palestinians should use the peace process to expose him. Get Rabin on the train and make sure the train is moving too fast for him to drop off."

He said that in his view, one reason for the agonisingly slow pace of the negotiations was that in the Middle East, negotiators are often hesitant to make even token unilateral concessions to the other side, for fear that "this would be taken as a sign of weakness."

"But because of this mentality, both sides have gotten bogged down in the details, even though they face disaster because of this. The hard-liners are gaining, and we are losing time."

Dr. Brown told the Jordan Times that he believed that "the Palestinians should make the most of accepting their campaign as that of a weaker party striving towards decolonisation, and not waste their time fretting over the fact that they are the weaker side."

On this point, he reminded his audience that the Algerians, who had fought to end French rule in the 1950s and 1960s, had been at the time in

a similar position to today's Palestinians. They had never defeated the French military or logistically and never would have actually succeeded in doing so, but through their focused and concentrated effort over many years, they had finally forced the French to relinquish their grip on Algeria.

Mr. Brown explained that the U.S.'s general pro-Zionist tilt "is not so much out of any particular sentiment against the Arabs, but an ignorance of that aspect."

"There is a tendency in the Arab World to see a conspiratorial view of how the Zionist lobby in America, AIPAC (America-Israel Political Committee), works."

"But the U.S. is a mix of ethnic backgrounds, and just as Greek and Armenian Americans have an orientation towards activism in Old World affairs," he said, "so also do Jewish Americans who support Zionism," he said.

"Lobbyism is an essential factor of democracy. But the downside is that a well-organised group focused on a single issue, when not counter-balanced by a similar group of equal strength, can have a disproportionate impact on a democratic coun-

try's foreign policy in that area, he said.

As to how to deal with AIPAC's influence, Dr. Brown said that "the Arabs should not be so sensitive to congressional resolutions if they mean nothing on the ground. Such things should not distract and divert Arab attention."

"Know how to play to the fears, hopes and prejudices of the other side and the public, and don't shoot yourself in the foot with what you say. The Israelis know how to play to the U.S. public. And the Arabs all too often do not."

Dr. Brown, a historian and Professor Emeritus in Foreign Affairs at Princeton University has written or contributed to some 10 books, covering a diverse range of Middle Eastern issues. His publications include: Tunisia: The Politics of Modernisation; International Politics in the Middle East; Old Rules, Dangerous Game; Centrestage; American Diplomacy since World War Two; and, The Continuing Ottoman Legacy in the Middle East and Southeast Europe.

Dr. Brown is on a USIS (U.S. Information Service) sponsored tour of the region.

Palestine council to hold applicant interviews soon

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Palestine Council for Economic Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR) is processing applications from experts in taxes, customs and financial administration and plans to conduct personal interviews late this month and early next month.

Jawad Naji, head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Economic Department in Amman, said there was a good response to advertisements in the past two months inviting applications from qualified candidates in the Arab World and elsewhere.

More than 95 per cent of all applicants are Palestinians and the rest were both Arabs and non-Arabs, Dr. Naji said, adding that the priority of the council was to select heads of departments who will then be given leeway to set up the departments and recruit their support staff.

The 13-member PECDAR was established in late 1993 as PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's chief of the PLO, and Mohammad Zuhdi Nashashibi, head of the Economic Department of the PLO, as his two deputies.

Other members of the council are: Ahmad Koreia (director-general), Hassan Abu Libdeh and Sari Nusseibeh (deputy directors-general), Suftan Al Sultan, Ibrahim Dikkeh, Nabil Qassis, Mohammad Sammour, Khalil Al Hindi, Yousef Sayegh, Anton Zahlan and Nabil Sharif.

The council is entrusted with devising a structure for economic development and administration for the occupied territories during the five-year Palestinian autonomy period envisaged in the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO accord.

It will also draw up plans for development projects in the occupied territories and act as a conduit for international assistance to support Palestinian self-rule as envisaged in the autonomy accord.

Dr. Naji rejected suggestions that pressure from donors, who have pledged \$2 billion in aid to the Palestinians, had prompted the council to look for talent outside the PLO. Reports have suggested that the council be administered by qualified economic experts rather than political appointees.

He said the council had established a good rapport with the World Bank, which is coordinating the international effort to financially support Palestinian self-rule and develop the Palestinian economy.

The interviews that the

council plans to conduct in Tunis, Jerusalem and elsewhere this month and next month will be with applicants for the posts of directors of treasury, budget, financial administration, internal audit, tax and customs as well as computer experts.

"We have to have a streamlined state economy with no less responsibilities and functions than those of a full government," said Dr. Naji. "As such, every aspect of a national economy has to be addressed."

The council expects that it needs \$400 million for running costs during the first year of Palestinian autonomy. A meeting of a steering committee supervising aid for Palestinians, decided in January to allocate up to \$160 million to help start autonomy.

"That is their estimate, but we believe that the \$400 million figure reflects more accurately our actual needs," said Dr. Naji.

He said contacts were continuing between the council and the steering committee. The panel is meeting in Paris this week to review the progress of self-rule arrangements and review allocation of funds for specific projects.

Some of the donors have already allocated part of their pledges to various U.N. agencies already working in the occupied territories.



HISTORY TEACHING REVIEWED: History scholars Monday participate in the first day of three-day seminars designed to launch greater cooperation among Arab universities in the teaching of history. Organised by the Association of Arab Universities (AAU) in cooperation with the University of Jordan, Yarmouk and Mutha universities, the opening day was hosted at the University of Jordan. The second and third days will be hosted by Yarmouk and Mutha universities.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent visits Armed Forces H.Q.

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the Regent, Monday visited the Armed Forces General Headquarters where he was received by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Miral Al Kaabneh and senior army officers. The Regent and Gen. Kaabneh discussed issues of concern to the armed forces. Prince Mohammad also congratulated the chairman on the 26th anniversary of Al Karameh Battle.

Jordan marks Karameh Battle anniversary

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan Monday marked the 26th anniversary of Al Karameh Battle in which Jordanian land forces defeated a dawn attack launched by Israel in the central Jordan Valley area. On the occasion, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Miral Al Kaabneh attended the Armed Forces celebration in Al Karameh town, where he laid a wreath at the martyr's monument. Gen. Kaabneh also met with delegations representing government and public institutions which arrived at Karameh to attend the celebrations. These delegations also laid wreaths at the monument. The celebration was attended by Balqa governor, Eid Al Qatameh, the chief of staff of the land forces, the assistant chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, senior army officers, government officials and citizens. Also marking the

occasion, University of Jordan President-Fawzi Gharaibeh, Monday opened a photo exhibition entitled "Photos from Karameh and the Arabisation of the Jordan Arab Army." The three-day exhibition includes photos depicting the development of the Armed Forces and the Arabisation of the army by His Majesty King Hussein in 1956. In addition, it includes photos of Al Karameh Battle, as well as photos depicting the humanitarian role played by the Jordanian Armed Forces through its participation in peace-keeping activities in various parts of the world.

New bloc formed at Lower House

AMMAN (Petra) — A new parliamentary bloc, "The Parliamentary Brotherhood Bloc," has been formed at the Lower House of Parliament, according to Deputy Tawfiq Kreishan. Mr. Kreishan said that the bloc, which in addition to him includes deputies Nader Thubeirat, Salem Al Zawaideh and Ali Al Shanti, aims to facilitate parliamentary work in a manner that would serve national interests. The bloc, he said, would support any other trend at the House in drafting legislation and taking resolutions, provided that they are beneficial to national interests. This bloc raises the number of parliamentary blocs to seven. The other six blocs are: the Democratic Parliamentary Coalition, the National Action Front, the Islamic Action Front, the National Jordanian Front, the independent members, and the Independent Parliamentary Bloc.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of heritage (Jordanian fashions, wooden sculptures, fresh and dried flowers, and cards) at the University of Jordan.
- ★ Exhibition by Syrian artists Abdul Manan Shamma, Khalid Almuz, and Mamdouh Khashan at Ab'ad Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of sculptures and drawings by Jordanian sculptor Samer Tabbara. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists at Darat Al Funun of the Abdal Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh (Tel. 643251/2).
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Writers Do Draw" by Jamal Naji, Ibrahim Nasrallah, and Farouq Wadi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Syrian artists Abdul Qader Azzouz and Aoun Al Droubi at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture (Tel. 695291).
- ★ Exhibition by artist Amer Mohammad Rashad entitled "A Thousand and One Nights" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition by artists Iman Khalifeh and Hamed Rashad at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition by artist Shawkat Al Rubai'y at the Orfali Art Gallery in Um Utheina (Tel. 826932).

ABC WEEKLY NEWS

- ★ ABC Weekly News Highlights and the MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

LECTURES

- ★ Lecture on music by scholar Bassem Petros at Darat Al Funun of the Abdal Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Lecture on the negotiations, peace process, and the latest developments in the Arab arena by Mr. Marwan Dudin at the Arab Youth Forum at 5:00 p.m.

Expert urges more effort by Mideast nations to cooperate in improving region's water budget

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The nations of the Middle East must make greater efforts to cooperate together in developing and utilising their already limited water resources or face serious problems by the year 2000, said Murad Bino, the executive director of the Inter-Islamic Network on Water Resources Development and Management (INWRDAM).

"The basic common denominator of the Middle East countries is their lack of water resources," Mr. Bino said. "All of these countries will face serious water shortages within this decade, and this will be a limitation on the development of these countries."

"If dialogue and cooperation were improved between these countries, and trust established, the situations of all would be improved. There is a need for unified actions."

INWRDAM, a sub-body of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), under the administration of the Conference's Standing Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation (COMSTECH), was established with its headquarters in Amman in 1987.

It currently has eight member countries — Jordan, Egypt, Tunis, Turkey, Mali, Niger, Bangladesh and Pakis-

tan.

"We are currently working on bringing Syria, Sudan, and Palestine into INWRDAM as member countries to establish a dialogue between them and our other member countries in the region on their related water problems," Mr. Bino said.

"When water is in shortage it becomes a strategic resource — thus, the sensitivity of Middle Eastern countries in their willingness to give others information on their water resources."

"But these countries must realise that cooperation is inevitable when water resources are stretched across international boundaries. Water basins, lakes and rivers do not know or work in accordance with political borders and must be shared."

Mr. Bino said INWRDAM was created by the OIC "with the purpose of establishing a dialogue among its member countries" and thereby increase their coordination and cooperation in the field of water resources development and management, and to "identify the research and development components of improving the utilisation of the existing resources available in the region."

He saw two capacities where research and development applications could substantially increase Jordan's water budget (the yearly

amount of fresh water available for usage).

The first was additional recycling of used water.

"Jordan already uses water in two cycles — after its initial use, it is often retreated and reused for irrigation. There can be an improvement if we go to a full three-stage cycle of first domestic and household, then industrial, and then agricultural use of the same water," assuming proper treatment of the water after each stage.

"This is one activity going on currently which should be expanded. As well, it is currently being carried out at a low-tech level. But if it were carried out at a high-tech level," he said, it could add 15 to 20 per cent to Jordan's current water budget.

The second capacity was the investigation of utilising brackish waters, located in deep underground aquifers, which appear to be "abundant" in Jordan according to drilling studies conducted previously, said Mr. Bino.

There are, however, two current obstacles to its usage, he stated. The first is that "a technical breakthrough in the desalination of brackish water is needed. With the current available procedures, it is expensive to treat."

"It is also currently very expensive to drill such deep wells" to the below-ground

levels where this water is located, he added.

"But the Jordanian government is seriously considering utilising this water as a resource, and if new techniques are developed, used and proved viable, then other countries can benefit from these methods as well."

As for "INWRDAM itself, Mr. Bino said, "we are presently at the stage where we are still a relatively new organisation. On this basis, we are concentrating for now primarily on establishing a solid programme of a data network and quality services for our current member countries, in order to gain a credibility base" with the OIC countries as a whole.

Among INWRDAM's important activities for the future, Mr. Bino listed its efforts to expand and develop its data base on the water resources of OIC countries and a project to improve the quality and accuracy of the water data collected by its member countries, "as the current information is not always reliable and accurate."

INWRDAM is also compiling a standardised water information catalogue for its member countries and is working on training the middle management employees of its members who work in water resources management, he added.

JTV to air Friday in-depth news hour

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (JTV) announced that every Friday beginning March 25 the half-hour Arabic "News at Eight" programme on Channel I will be extended to 60 minutes of news reports and analysis from Jordan and other sources.

On Channel II (the foreign

language channel), JTV will begin broadcasting a Jordanian drama series with subtitles in English plus other Jordanian-made programmes in an effort to encourage local productions and rely less on imported programmes.

"Hubub Al Reeh" (The Blowing Wind), the first drama series to be aired beginning April 1, depicts Palestine under the British mandate and the 1948 Arab-

Israeli war, according to Ibrahim Shahzadeh, JTV acting director general. He said the same series was televised on Channel I about 10 years ago.

Mr. Shahzadeh, who worked for Radio Jordan and then Jordan Television since 1957, was appointed acting director of the corporation by Information Minister Jawad Anani following the resignation of the former director general, Radi Alkhas.



GERMAN RADIO JOURNALISTS MEET IN AMMAN: The German Broadcasting Network (ARD) Monday begins its three-day regional meeting in Amman to discuss issues pertaining to radio journalism and major developments in the Middle East region, particularly the peace process. "We chose Amman for its central location in the region and the major role Jordan plays in the peace process," said Jorg Kaminski, head of the Amman ARD office. "We are here to discuss the peace process, which is of tremendous interest in Germany and means of coordination among our offices in the region in covering its develop-

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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

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Wrong target

IT WAS unfortunate for Jordan that the U.N. Security Council, under pressure from the U.S. and Britain, decided last week to extend the sanctions imposed on Iraq indefinitely — despite the fact that Iraq has complied with most if not all of the Security Council resolutions, especially those related to arms control. This extension of the sanctions was forced by the Americans and the British despite favourable reports by U.N. envoys and inclination on the part of the other council members — France, Russia and China — to start lifting the sanctions regime. The council's decision, of course, did not take into consideration the fact that the sanctions are having tremendously negative results on the Iraqi people and are doing so little to change the Iraqi regime itself. Furthermore, the sanctions are taking their toll on Jordan, which has lost hundreds of millions of dollars already as a result of abiding by them.

While trade is being freely practised all along the Iraqi borders with Iran, Turkey and Syria, the American-led U.N. naval force targets Aqaba, Jordan's only sea outlet, for a harsh regime of inspection. The Jordanian leadership and Jordanian officials have repeatedly complained to the U.S. government over such an unfair treatment. And U.S. officials, including Secretary Warren Christopher during his last visit here, have repeatedly promised to address the matter. So far nothing has materialised. This state of affairs is of course unacceptable. Jordan is being itself blockaded and by its so-called friends. Jordanian businesses are losing in terms of delays and diversions of cargo and harassments by the U.N. naval force. Under international law, a sea blockade is considered to be war.

Jordan has over the decades proved itself a respected and respectful member of the international community and an adherent of the U.N. charter and its resolutions. Especially as pertains to the Gulf crisis, the Kingdom has abided by all the Security Council resolutions. For these reasons we feel that the U.S., despite, protestations to the contrary, is targeting the country for no good reason at all. The U.S., therefore, needs to realise that such policies are counterproductive and threaten both the well-being of Jordan and the much-aspired to peace in the region.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Monday described this week's visit to Oman and Qatar by His Majesty King Hussein as yet one more effort in his ongoing endeavours to reestablish Arab solidarity following years of estrangement and poor relations among Arab regimes. Praising the leaders of Oman and Qatar for working on upholding the higher national interests, Tareq Masarweh said that regardless of their side differences, the Arab states should realise that they have a common interest as they are facing a common destiny. Oman and Qatar have refrained from severing relations with other Arab states during the Gulf crisis and have been constantly seeking reconciliation among the Arabs at large, he pointed out. Qatar, for its part, has been presenting to viewers daily television programmes depicting the suffering of the Iraqi people and, together with Oman, the Gulf state has been joining hands with King Hussein to bring about reconciliation between the conflicting regimes of the Arab World, he added. The writer expressed hope that the King's visit would open the way for a wider pan-Arab solidarity that would help boost the Arab Nation's strength.

COMMENTING ON the recent U.N. Security Council's decision to retain the embargo on Iraq, a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily said that the decision was in fact an American decision, another American stab in the back of the Arab Nation and an insult to the Arab people. Fahed Fanek said that the United States, which has influenced this resolution, was the perpetrator of the massacre committed against the Iraqi people in 1991. The U.S. atrocities against the Iraqis continue with the perpetuation of the sanctions which are aimed at starving the women and children, he charged. Noting that hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died as a direct result of the sanctions, the writer said that the U.S. administration's embargo on Iraq represents an open invitation to people to resort to acts of terrorism, extremism and hatred in the Middle East. Criticising the Arab countries for their submission to the American-influenced U.N. sanctions, the writer said it is regrettable that the Arab states are allowing themselves to be accessories to this dastard crime.

The View from Fourth Circle

Mideastern nationhood, idiots and the march of history

By Rami G. Khouri

The end of the cold war and the dismantling of the 20th century Soviet empire have unleashed forces of nationalism, regionalism and state configuration that were frozen for most of this century, as we witness in the former Yugoslavia and the nationalist struggles under way in some of the Asian-Islamic former Soviet republics.

National reconfiguration, however, goes well beyond the former Soviet Union, and should be of urgent importance to the peoples of the Middle East. A provocative article by Robert Kaplan in the New York Times Magazine last month has prompted an important debate about the current and future status of the countries of the Middle East and of Central Asia, in view of the historic changes that are under way in both areas.

The basic thesis of the Kaplan article is that the modern countries in the Middle East (essentially the Levant) are artificial creations that cannot survive in their present form and that we will witness the same sort of turmoil, violence and national reconfiguration that are under way in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. His thesis is agonisingly provocative. Kaplan writes:

"Like Yugoslavia, all these Arab states were artificial creations of post-World War I peace treaties that represented the imperial powers' best attempt to impose order in the chaos that followed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The notion that these states — little more than lines drawn on a map by Winston Churchill and others — will have an uneventful transition to legitimising-democratic rule is rather tenuous."

"If history is a narrative, the Arab-Israeli conflict, as an appendage of the cold war, has been a long and bloody footnote. As that footnote concludes, we return to the main story, whose theme is not what new alliances will emerge, but which states from the post-World War I peace treaties will survive. Given what has happened in the Balkans and in the Caucasus states, it is naive not to expect redefining, even violent, turmoil in the Arab World."

Kaplan says that as history "resumes" in the Balkans, Central Asia and the Middle East, the influence of Turkey on the states of its former Ottoman Empire will increase "as nearby dictatorships slowly crumble." He also suggests that Turkey's four decades of experimentation with coherent nationhood and democracy may provide a relevant model of democratisation in the northwestern (Balkan) and southeastern (Arab-Levantine) parts of the former Ottoman Empire.

These are intriguing ideas that merit widespread, public discussion throughout this region. The fact that they are presented in an article by an American scholar also repeats a pattern that has become almost routine since the end of the cold war. Kaplan's article should be seen, along with the "end of history" article by Fukuyama and the "clash of civilisations" article by Huntington, as troubling confirmation of the current global reality: the transnational intellectual debate about national identity and statehood in the Middle East and other parts of the world is increasingly initiated and defined by American and other western authors.

There is both truth and nonsense in what Kaplan writes. Many of the novel states that have comprised the modern Balkans, the Caucasus and the Levant share a shaky historical foundation. Some of them have already unravelled, a few are plagued by intense stress, and others remain artificially locked

in the troubling brand of Oriental authoritarianism that has been a hallmark of the modern Middle East.

The consequences of freeing the geo-political and militaristic forces that have kept these regions frozen since mid-century — what Kaplan aptly calls "the resumption of history" — are not yet clear. The sentiments and forces that will determine what our region looks like in several decades, however, are already very clear. Among the most important ones are Islam, Arabism, tribalism, ethnicity, patriarchy, communalism and the rising power of commercialism — Arab nationalist and Islamic slogans are hard to spot on the streets of the Arab World today in between the forests of Coca Cola and Reebok signs.

Democracy — at least the brand of participatory, republican democracy that was born in France and the United States in the late 18th century and that has spread to the four corners of the globe — is culturally and politically novel, if not alien, to our region. Yet, all the Arab/Islamic people in our region are struggling to develop new political cultures that are essentially democratic in spirit and form. The nature of "democracy" in our region, however, will be rather different from the democratic traditions of Western Europe and North America — because in order to be stable and meaningful, Levantine democracy will have to be based on communal Arab/Islamic cultural traditions and social values that are very different from the western emphasis on individual rights.

"All the Arab/Islamic people in our region are struggling to develop new political cultures that are essentially democratic in spirit and form. The nature of 'democracy' in our region, however, will be rather different... because in order to be stable and meaningful, Levantine democracy will have to be based on communal Arab/Islamic cultural traditions and social values that are very different from the western emphasis on individual rights."

The debates about Middle Eastern "democratisation" and about how long the existing Arab states can endure cannot be separated from one another. The birth of a modern, more responsive Arab political culture is deeply tied to the capacity of the existing states to respond to their people's rights, needs and aspirations. The end of the cold war and the impending resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict have coincided with the obvious, massive and pervasive failure of most, but not all, of the existing Arab states to meet the socio-economic and political needs of their people.

Therefore, most Arab countries are in the grip of tense domestic confrontations between people who are struggling to meet their basic needs and regimes that are struggling to retain their grip on power. This situation prevails in some of the artificial new states that were born in the post-colonial statehood jamboree, but also in states that enjoy a credible and long historical identity (such as Egypt, Iran and Turkey). This suggests to me that the root causes of the problems in our

turbulent region are two: first, the artificiality of some states that suffer economic distress because the balance between their populations and their natural resources has slipped into the negative; and second, the inefficient systems of autocratic political governance that have not allowed the Middle East's deep historical legacy of ethnic and religious pluralism to be translated into modern forms of political, social and ideological pluralism.

Kaplan is correct that the resumption of history will see a major reconfiguration of the borders, cultural composition and regional relationships of many states in our area. But I think his ethnocentric perspective causes him to miss a crucial point about the nature of history in our region — perhaps because in his American political and social culture history is novel, if not even alien. He does not appreciate that history for us is not a fixed and rigid guardian and that the reason our societies endure while our national structures rattle and shake is that our people have been defining the process of national and historical evolution for the last, oh, ten thousand years. At many major historical junctures, the peoples of the Middle East evolved new social-national configurations and political systems that suited their cultural values and economic-environmental conditions. This happened at the start of history in the Neolithic and Neolithic periods, about 10,000-8,000 years ago; when the very concept of nationhood and statehood were born; and again and again throughout the Classical, Byzantine and early and medieval Islamic periods.

There is no other region in the world whose historical experience with viable nationhood is as old and as rich as ours. The whole point of the political and social challenges that contemporary Middle Eastern regimes now face from their people is that the people of the Middle East are hard at work, once again, trying to redress the balance of their distorted statehood, dependent economies and battered psyches. New countries will emerge and existing ones will fade away, as has happened in our lands for thousands of years. Some Arab countries will disappear because they do not make sense. Others will endure and flourish because they have proven themselves to be credible and meaningful to their people.

In other words, the birth and death of nations in the Middle East does not reflect only our suffering the retributions of history, but also our making of history. We are not the slaves of history; we are its practitioners — and if we are clever and diligent enough, perhaps even its masters. Changes will occur in this region just as they have in the Balkans and Central Asia, and Kaplan is correct to look at the countries of this broader geographic region as ones that will experience parallel transformations from the 20th to the 21st centuries.

One hopes that as we make history, we can also make a greater contribution to the international scholarly and intellectual debate about these enormous, and enormously important, subjects. One reality about the march of history that we have not sufficiently grasped is that, in today's smaller world, the discussion about the march of history is almost as important as the process of historical change itself. We allowed the West to define us at the start of the 20th century; we would look like stark, raving idiots to allow the West to define us again at the start of the 21st century.

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Serbs could join Muslim-Croat union, but at a price

By Alison Smale
The Associated Press

BELGRADE — Muslim and Croat leaders signed agreements in Washington Friday to create a Bosnia Federation, putting the Bosnian Serbs under pressure to give up some of the land they gained in battle. But they will yield only if permitted strong ties with Serbia proper.

That would effectively break up the war-ravaged Bosnia state which the Muslim-led government, the biggest loser of the war, has fought so bitterly to preserve.

Currently, the Muslim-Croat Federation controls only 30 per cent of Bosnia. Serbs have the rest, hence U.S. President Bill Clinton's strong plea at the signing ceremony Friday to the Serbs to join in reaching an overall peace.

Bosnian Serbs have indicated in the past week they could join the U.S.-backed federation, and give up some of the territory they hold.

Reacting to Mr. Clinton's bid to bring Serbs into the process, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said late Friday that Serbs are ready to cooperate but would insist on equal treatment, including lifting of sanctions against Serb-dominated Yugoslavia.

But their terms and the amount of land they would relinquish are not yet enough for the Muslims and Croats.

"The maximum we can give to the Muslims and Croats is 45 per cent," said Momcilo Krajcinovic, president of the self-styled Bosnian Serb Assembly.

Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic says the new federation would need about 60 per cent of Bosnia-Herzegovina to be viable.

Senior U.S. officials have hinted the settlement should be about 50-50. If Bosnia's Serbs do not concede, Washington could encourage the lifting of the international arms embargo that has weakened the Muslims and Croats against superior Serb firepower.

The Bosnian Serbs also want stronger ties with their neighbour, Serbia proper. In effect, they would be members to some degree of the new Bosnia Federation, but also have ties to Serbia — which ultimately could prove

stronger than any allegiance to the newly constructed Bosnian state.

The argument over land is crucial to an overall peace settlement, which Washington, Moscow and Western Europe must pressure the three warring factions into making.

In the process, the Russians and Americans also want to resolve the burning issue of the Serb minority in Croatia.

Croatia's Serbs captured one third of Croatia in a six-month war in 1991. It ended with an uneasy U.N.-brokered truce in January 1992, but ignited the much fiercer three-way war in Bosnia, where up to 200,000 people are dead or missing.

Without a solution for Croatia's Serbs, a Bosnian peace settlement is impossible.

Serbia's hard-line President Slobodan Milosevic, the key power broker in the region, has recently indicated he is willing to accept a peace settlement in Bosnia and Croatia. By doing so, he hopes the tough international sanctions that have helped cripple Serbia's economy would be lifted.

Russian and American envoys are expected in Belgrade in coming weeks to shuttle diplomacy intensified to calm almost three years of Balkan bloodshed.

America's intervention now has helped reforge the Muslim-Croat alliance which existed when armed Serbs rebelled in March 1992 against the vote by Bosnia's Muslims and Croats to leave the Serb-dominated Yugoslav Federation.

A year ago, Muslims and Croats started battling fiercely over Bosnian territory left untouched by the Serbs. Now that they are reunited, Washington envisages some kind of loose union between the new Bosnia Federation and neighbouring Croatia.

That has encouraged the Bosnian Serbs to insist on a similar association with Serbia proper.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic told Russian envoy Vitaly Churkin last week that the Serbs would consider joining the federation only if permitted close ties with Serbia.

A growing conflict Territorial disputes continue to fuel Greek-Turkish antagonism

By Wes Jonasson

AN UNINTENDED consequence of the end of the Cold War as reflected in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty has been to engender an arms build-up in both Greece and Turkey, which could lead these two NATO "allies" (but old antagonists) into open conflict. War in Bosnia and the potential for conflict involving ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia, not to mention Greece's over hostility to the latter, add more layers of tension to relations already strained over Cyprus, the Aegean and ethnic Turks in Thrace.

While the CFE's main purpose is to reduce force levels in central Europe, it permits Greece to keep 1,735 tanks in its inventory. In 1987 Greece listed 1,116, a mixed bag of M-478, M-488 and AMX's. However, under NATO's southern region amendment (the "Cascade" programme), both Greece and Turkey are acquiring surplus weapons from other member countries. Over the past two years Greece has either imported or refitted over 1,000 M-60 main battle tanks, a very significant upgrade. The same is true of Turkey. Listing 3,700 tanks in 1987, Ankara is in the process of acquiring 1,600 M-60s.

Tank transfers in 1992 alone involving Greece and Turkey headed a list published by the United Nations last October. "The greatest cause for concern in the U.N. register is the Greek-Turkish arms race" stated Natalia Goldring, deputy director of the British-American Security Information Council, an independent research organisation with offices in London and Washington. The U.S. reported that it exported 492 tanks to Greece and 577 to Turkey. Greece claimed 447 imports, 347 from the U.S. and 100 from the Netherlands. Germany also sent 11 tanks to Turkey.

In three years under conservative Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis, Greece absorbed over \$1 billion in U.S. foreign military sales, enabling it to purchase advanced state-of-the-art weaponry. It has ordered 40 additional F-16 fighter aircraft and 12 Apache attack helicopters and will take delivery of 28 surplus F-4 Phantoms and 36 A-7 aircraft. It has acquired four additional naval destroyers and six frigates and is building four more. Under CFE, quantities of artillery, armoured personnel carriers and ammunition stocks have also been received.

However, Ankara's current armed forces upgrade dwarfs that of Athens (MEI-443). With a windfall of \$3 billion as a reward for its actions during the Gulf crisis, Turkey has embarked on a modernisation programme since 1988 which may cost over \$10 billion. A key indicator of where Turkey stands today is the fact that it is co-producing 160 F-16s, as well as guns and tanks with a French company. Apart from projected F-16 sales to the Middle East, Turkey plans to add 160 aircraft to its own inventory.

Set to receive 100 surplus helicopter gunships from the U.S., Turkey has ordered 95 Sikorsky Blackhawks for \$1.37 billion (reportedly the largest U.S. Exim Bank loan guarantee ever).

Already co-producing armoured fighting vehicles in cooperation with the U.S. FMC company, Turkey will buy 74 armoured personnel carriers for its police. Other projects include upgrading F-4 and F-5 fighters, aerial refuelling and reconnaissance, low-level air defence, and \$1 billion for military communications.

Having deployed the largest army in NATO, the Turks are reducing it from 600,000 to create a mobile strike force of 350,000 by the late 1990s. Given its projected acquisitions of new equipment, it will hold unquestioned superiority over the Greeks whose armed forces have a total strength of about 200,000. Both con-

script for 18 months' compulsory service.

Potential flashpoints

There are three principal potential flashpoints. The first is Cyprus. It responds to what President Glafkos Clerides of Cyprus calls a new and disturbing build-up of Turkish occupation forces on the divided island, the recently re-elected Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu, has agreed to include Cyprus in Greece's defence sphere. This has provoked bellicose talk in Athens and in Ankara, but more importantly, an additional element of instability will be injected into the situation should Athens also agree to Clerides' request to send additional military forces to the island. A Greek division will not greatly strengthen Cyprus' existing defences, but it could spark off war if Greek and Turkish troops become involved in a serious incident.

The second flashpoint is the Aegean: the Greek navy dominates the Aegean and a "forward policy" adopted by Athens has bolstered Greek island defences opposite the Turkish mainland. The Turks maintain sizeable military forces, including 100 fleet-landing craft, in the area. Turkey questions the right of Greece to fortify the eastern Aegean under the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne (Athens claims that the Montreux Convention of 1936 and the Arras Declaration give them this right); and, periodically skirmishes have occurred. Whether it has been scrambling jets or holding naval exercises, Greece and Turks have gone "nose to nose" with dangerous results. In 1987, Papandreu threatened war because of the intrusion of a Turkish oil exploration vessel into what are hotly contested waters. The possible existence of off-shore petroleum deposits increases prospects for renewed boundary disputes.

The Greek region of Thrace, the third potential flashpoint, is a thin strip of territory bordered on the north by Bulgaria and on the east of Turkey. It has a Muslim majority population which accuses the government of discrimination. Ankara attempts, with some success, to keep the issue of "Turkish" rights alive. Occasionally chronic tensions erupt in skirmishes at the Evros river border.

The last gesture of friendship expressed between these two neighbours was the attendance by Mr. Mitsotakis at the funeral of President Ozal last April. Since that time the atmosphere has remained clouded by Turkey's outspoken eagerness to widen its role with NATO in Bosnia, and a very active diplomacy which has seen Foreign Minister Cetin and senior defence officials travel a well worn path between Ankara, Sofia, Skopje and Tirana, cutting across what many in Athens like to think of as a Greek-Serb axis. A flood of illegal Albanians into Greece, the plight of the Greek minority in Albania and a bitter quarrel with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, inflamed recently by Athens' denial of Macedonia's accession to the Greek port of Salonika, not to mention Turkey's testing of regional wills, has more often than not led Greek leaders to wrap themselves in the flag and populist nationalism.

Most recently Ankara has accused Athens of supporting what it has chosen to call "terrorism" because of Greece's adamant refusal to ban an information office associated with the PKK. There also are indications that Ankara intends to reopen the Aegean island issue. Tensions have thrown NATO's southern flank into complete disarray, with Turkey having vetoed the setting-up of a NATO command in Greece and Greece countered by placing all such plans "on hold." The obvious "bottom line" is that an arms build-up amid deteriorating relations between allies who are in reality antagonists may one day lead to war.

(Middle East International).

Excavations in south Jordan uncover the cave and monastery of Saint Lot, 'a righteous man'

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

This is the first of two articles on recent scholarly work in the Ghor Al Safi region along the southeastern shore of the Dead Sea. This first part looks at the excavations of the cave and monastery of St. Lot.

On a steep hillside overlooking the fertile plain of Ghor Al Safi along the southeastern shore of the Dead Sea, excavation and conservation work is continuing on one of the most exciting archaeological discoveries in Jordan in recent years — the Cave and Sanctuary of St. Lot.

The site was first reported by the Canadian scholar Burton MacDonald during his survey of the area in 1986, and in 1987 excavations started under the direction of the Greek-American scholar Konstantinos D. Politis, of the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities at the British Museum in London. Four seasons of excavations have uncovered virtually the entire complex, revealing an important biblical-Byzantine site that promises to become an important stop on the touristic itinerary of modern Jordan.

Lot, the son of Abraham's brother Haran, is first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis 11:31. After a quarrel between Lot's and Abraham's herds, Lot and his followers left Abraham and beaded for the well watered region of the Dead Sea Plain, settling in the city of Zoar, modern Safi (which is depicted on the 6th century Byzantine mosaic map of Palestine in Madaba).

According to the Genesis accounts, when God was angered by the immoral behaviour of the people of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, He destroyed the two cities but sent angels to rescue Lot (mentioned in the Bible and the Koran as "a righteous man") and his wife and daughters. Lot tried to convince his two sons-in-law to flee too, but they thought his warning about the impending destruction of the cities was a joke. When Lot's wife looked back at the burning cities, she was turned into a pillar of salt. Genesis 19:30 says that "Lot and his two daughters left Zoar (ed. modern Safi) and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave."

The biblical tales then recount that Lot's daughters, fearing they may never marry and bear children, pled Lot with liquor and cohabited with him in the cave, after which they conceived two children who gave rise to the Moabite and Ammonite people. The fantastic and rather derogatory nature of this story may be explained by its context: the Genesis accounts to the Bible were written by ancient Hebrews/Jews who were constantly fighting against the Ammonites and Moabites, and depicting the origins of their trans-Jordanian enemies in this manner may simply have been an extension of national combat into the sphere of literary religious texts. Ridiculing your enemies and their national origin, it seems, is a time-honoured practice.

Lot is also associated with the Genesis accounts about a coalition of four kings from the north who invaded the region of Sodom and Gomorrah and the other Cities of the Plain and took Lot captive. Abraham travelled north and gave chase to the four kings, whom he defeated in battle north of Damascus, thereby rescuing his nephew Lot.

Lot emerged in the early Christian era as an important biblical figure, and the site of his stay in Safi has always been revered as a sacred holy site; until recently, though, its precise location had not been identified. Mr. Politis' excavations have now definitively associated the cave and monastery complex with the Lot story in Genesis.

The site comprises a cave, a church, a water reservoir, a monastery, and terraced agricultural fields, most of which were in use from the Byzantine to the early Abbasid periods (around the 5th to 8th centuries AD). Clearly, Mr. Politis said in a recent interview with the Jordan Times, the monastery became an important pilgrimage site in the Byzantine period, when the legend of St. Lot was venerated throughout this part of the Middle East.

The Lot legend is well represented in the region, both historically and in terms of sacred sites associated with his life and legend. There are numer-

ous references in the Koran to the prophet Lot ("Nabi Lut" [pronounced 'Lote']), who is called a righteous man, eg. "...to Lot also we gave wisdom and knowledge and we delivered him from the city which practised abominations. They were indeed a wicked and rebellious people. We admitted him to our mercy; surely he was of the righteous" (Al Anbiya, 73-74); also, "Allah cites as examples of disbelievers the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were married to two righteous servants of ours, but they acted disloyally towards them" (Al Tahrim, 9).

Churches, tombs, mosques, and monasteries dedicated to St. Lot can be found in Madaba, Hebron, near Jerusalem and elsewhere in this region. From 16th and 17th century Europe, over 100 paintings and drawings have been identified depicting the story of Lot and his daughters. Most of these works of art are on display today in major art museums in Europe and North America.

The heart of the complex is the triple-apsed basilical church built in front of the cave. According to an inscription in its mosaic floor, the existing church dates from April 691 AD, when it was expanded into its present basilical plan. The earliest firm date is a mosaic inscription in the north aisle of the church from May 606 AD. The earliest church on the site was probably built in the 6th century, judging from the pottery finds, old mosaic cubes, and the reference to the church from the 6th century AD Madaba mosaic map. Like most other ancient churches in Jordan, this one continued in use into the Umayyad and early Abbasid periods. The April 691 AD inscription is evidence for this, as are the finds of Umayyad and early Abbasid pottery and glass.

The mosaics of the church are adorned with geometric, floral and animal depictions, with many of the red-leaf floral designs closely resembling Nabataean styles. This probably reflects the continuity of Nabataean art styles from the heartland of the Nabataean kingdom at Petra well into the early Islamic era. This continuity is also in line with the thin ware ceramics and pottery lamps from Petra that were found at the site in 5th-6th century layers, and several Nabataean architectural pieces (notably two capitals and two entablatures with typical Nabataean pointed crenellations).

Two inscriptions on reused stone blocks had the name of Lot, which helps to confirm the identification of this church as a memorial to St. Lot. Some reused architectural pieces from an earlier 5th-6th century structure suggest that this earlier church was precisely the one depicted on the Madaba mosaic map.

The cave itself, located at the end of the north aisle of the basilica, is the most intriguing part of the complex. The large natural cave was entered through an opening that did not have a door, but that was flanked on both sides with capitals decorated with cross-

ses. A plain mosaic floor and two steps led down to the floor of the rectangular cave, which was covered with fine white marble slabs imported from Greece.

The walls of the cave were plastered and had some Greek and Kufic graffiti, mostly the works of pilgrims asking for God's blessings. Pilgrims were probably told that the cave was the one where Lot stayed with his daughters after the fiery destruction of Sodom. The cave did not have any ecclesiastical facilities such as an altar, and thus it was probably not used as a chapel.

The excavations inside the cave produced many ceramic and glass lamps from the Byzantine and early Islamic periods. Below the mosaic floor were found earlier lamps typical of the 4th and 5th centuries AD. One lamp was decorated with the face of an old man, perhaps a portrait of Lot himself. Below this Byzantine level was discovered some early Roman fine pottery ware, perhaps indicating that the traditional regional association of this cave with a sacred spot started even before the Byzantine era.

Two metres below the surface of the cave, the excavators found a much earlier floor level with some late Early Bronze Age I (EBI) ceramic

culic facility, and it will be excavated this year.

The cave excavations also produced some freshwater mollusk shells, which suggest that the cave itself was once a spring source. There is a functioning spring at the foot of the mountain, which the team in charge of conservation of the site hopes to turn into the centrepiece of a modern archaeological park. The spring itself is historically and ecologically important because it contains several species of freshwater fish, snails, crab, and aquatic plants that have survived from the time when the Dead Sea was a living lake (known as Lake Lisan) tens of thousands of years ago.

Just north of the complex, Mr. Politis excavated one of the more than 25 Middle Bronze Age IIA tombs that were discovered. Dating from around 2000-1750 BC, these are the first Middle Bronze Age tombs ever discovered in the south Jordan Valley. The excavated tomb held two skeletons, along with 11 pots, and many stone and shell beads.

The monastery included a large, seven-metre-deep, arched water reservoir covered with palm trunks and served by its own water catchment system. The reservoir was rebuilt

several rooms with benches and ovens and produced hundreds of pieces of green and brown glazed pottery sherds, unique in the Middle East for this period. Below the floor of the kitchen was a communal tomb for the monks. Over 30 bodies have been identified in this tomb, including at least one black African, one woman and three infant children.

Five adjacent cyst graves that were also excavated contained the remains of a foetus, one newborn infant and three young children around one year of age. The analysis of these human remains will shed important new light on conditions in the Safi area in the Early Bronze and Byzantine periods, considering that so many other tombs have been robbed out in recent years and their contents lost to scholars. Mr. Politis is studying the hypothesis that there may have been a plague or epidemic in Zoar in the mid-6th century AD that was disastrous for the city of Zoar and for the nearby monastery.

In the late Byzantine period, such monasteries were important pilgrimage sites, and would have had to be self-sufficient in food, both to feed the residents and the visiting pilgrims. Evidence of meat



Dino Politis at the entrance to the cave (Photos and drawings by Dino Politis)

vegetarian and survived largely on bread and cereals. Monasticism was common in this region in the 6th century, and was often subsidised by the Byzantine state from its headquarters in Constantinople (modern Istanbul). St. Stephen of Mar Saba monastery, in the hills near Jerusalem, mentions in his diary that he often visited Mt Nebo and the monastery of St. Lot during his trips east of the Jordan River.

The complex of the Cave and Monastery of St. Lot is now being developed into a touristic site, and a small road and stepped pathway that have been built provide easier access to the site.

The archaeological work at the site has been sponsored by the British Museum, in cooperation with the Jordanian Department of Antiquities, and with the support of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities for the restoration and tourism services works. Additional support has come from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, the Palestine Exploration Fund, the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, the Society of Antiquaries of London, Biotrek, S.A., Jacob Suchard/Pavledes S.A., Aramex International Couriers, and the Jordan Valley Authority.



Aerial view of the monastery and cave of St. Lot, showing the church at centre, the cave opening at left and the reservoir at right

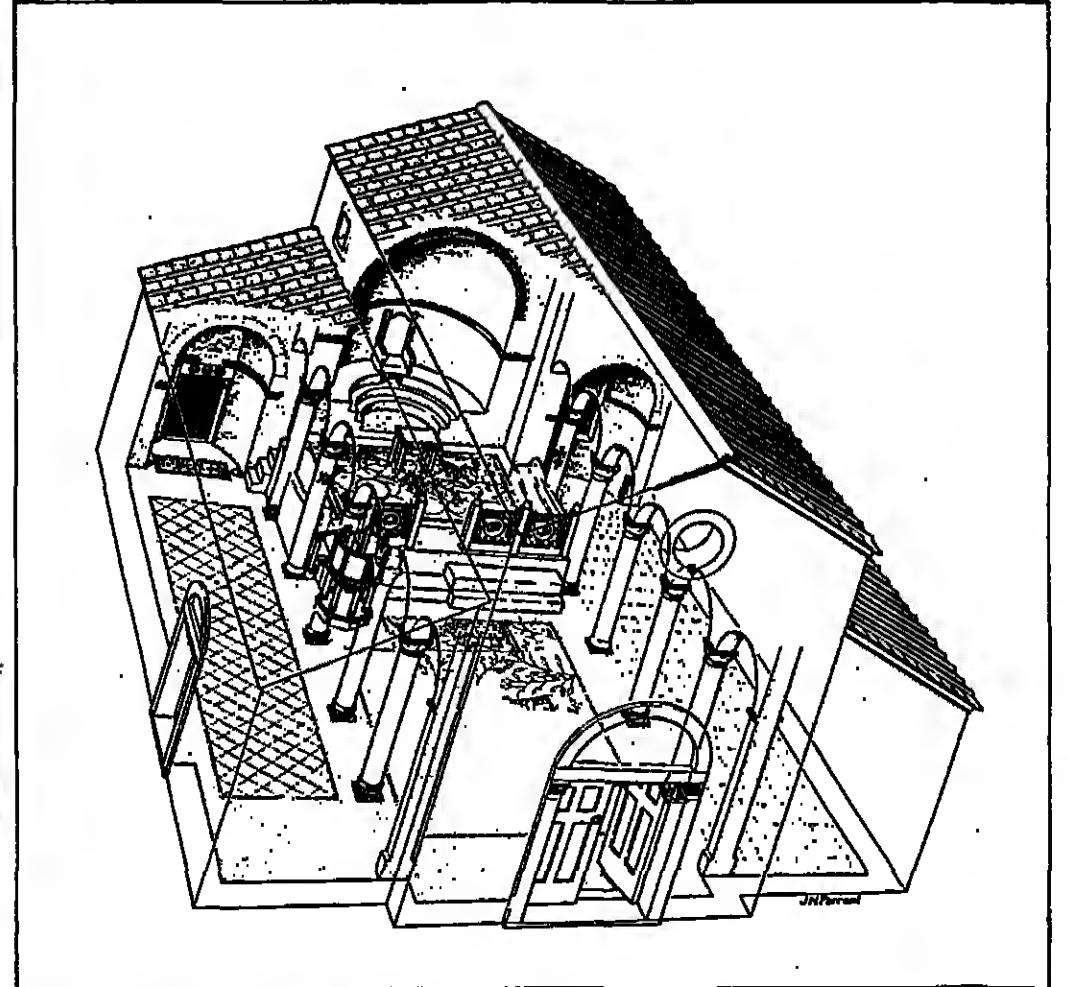
pots, a jug, a dipper cup, and several cups (c. 3000 BC), probably used for water or wine. This is the period that many scholars associate with the biblical account of Lot and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. In early March of this year, Mr. Politis' team identified the first EBI tomb at the site.

The earliest structure identified at the site to date is a long rectangular building that may date from the late Chalcolithic period, around 4000-3500 BC. The structure, located near the spring, may be a temple or

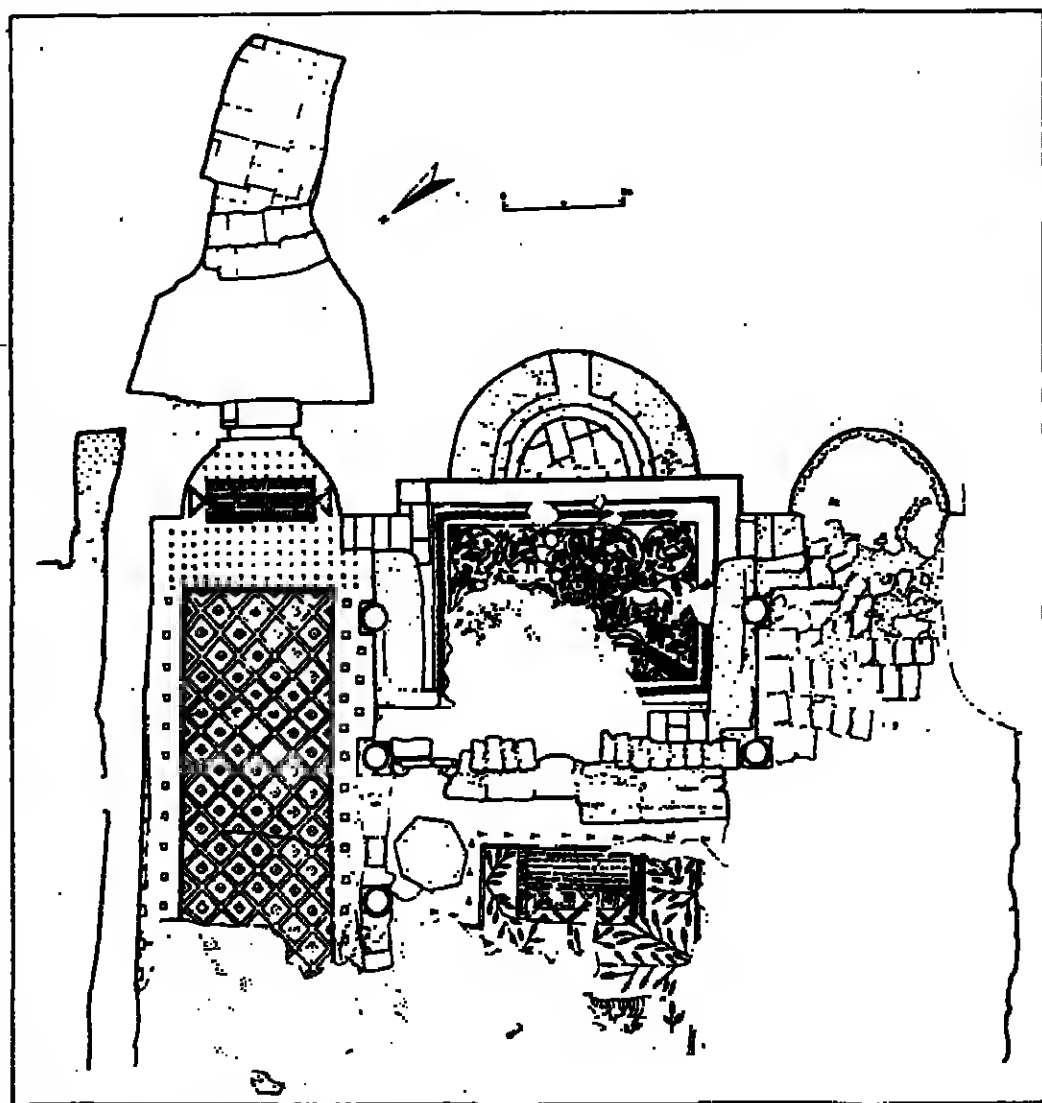
in the 7th century, and probably remained in use after the monastery lost its religious role in the late 7th century. The monastery complex seems to have stopped functioning at the end of the Byzantine period, though the church, the reservoir and the cave remained in use for perhaps another century.

The excavators uncovered the monastery's kitchen area, a number of dwelling cells for the monks and pilgrims and a field system for agricultural gardens. The kitchen had

preparation shows that the monks catered for pilgrims, for the monks themselves were



Reconstruction of the basilica of Lot



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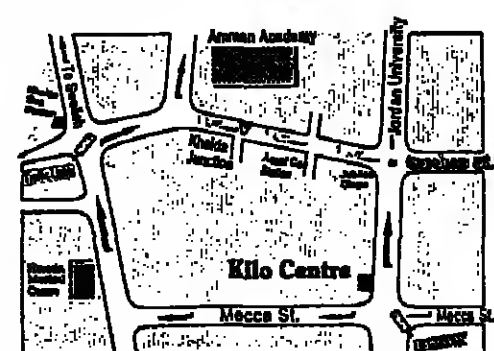
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Rafsanjani expects bright economic future in Iran

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani told his people their country was moving away from dependence on oil revenue and painted a bright picture of Iran's economic future.

Mr. Rafsanjani said in Sunday night messages on the Iranian new year which started March 21 that the country was geared to start its second five-year development plan with more confidence.

"The president said the exports of the country have almost quadrupled over the past four years, and this year the Islamic Republic of Iran would have about \$5 billion in non-oil revenue and its dependence on oil has very much diminished," the official Iranian news agency IRNA said.

It quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as saying: "If this movement continues, the second plan, God willing, can make us to a large extent independent of oil revenues."

"The first plan worked a lot for the country and the effects

of it will gradually become apparent," Mr. Rafsanjani said.

In London, the monthly Jane's Intelligence Review magazine said in its April edition that Iran appears to be on the brink of collapse as a viable state with political and economic conditions more fragile than at any time since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Diplomats and Iran-watchers in the region said the views expressed in the article were somewhat extreme and they did not believe a government collapse was imminent.

Iran's parliament last week approved an inflationary budget for the new year in a debate dominated by concern about low oil prices, the main source of hard cash, and mounting foreign debt.

Deputies cut government projections of revenue and expenditure by about 15 per cent, keeping it nominally balanced. Oil revenue is projected at \$10.15 billion, some \$2 billion

to \$3 billion less than this year's estimated income.

The bigger budget based on lower oil revenue is certain to fuel inflation, officially estimated at 30 per cent this year.

Iran said Friday it had agreed with four Western countries to defer repayments on \$5.6 billion in debt arrears.

Iranian newspapers have put short-term debt at around \$9 billion, but this figure appears to refer to arrears rather than the total debt, which bankers estimate variously at between \$20 billion and \$30 billion.

Mr. Rafsanjani said Iran has never been as independent of foreign influence as it is now and warned that the Islamic republic will not tolerate "loose morals and unprincipled social behaviour."

He said "foreign advisors and foreign experts are now forgotten words in this country, and the armed forces and in the industries the workers are all Iranians."

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JORDAN TIMES TEL 667171

'Britain is now better value'

LONDON (R) — Foreign tourists found Britain's public transport, shopping restaurants better value in 1993 than the year before, a British Tourist Authority survey said Monday.

It said 55 per cent of over-

seas visitors thought London's public transport system was good value in 1993 compared to 50 per cent in 1992. The pound's value crashed by about a fifth against most foreign currencies in September 1992.

Forty-seven per cent thought shopping was good value, up

from 35 per cent the year before, and 42 per cent considered British restaurants and cafes well-priced, compared with 28 per cent in 1992.

Approval rates for London hotel charges were still low, but rose from 12 per cent to 17.

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date: 18/3/94	European Opening Date: 21/3/94
Sterling Pound	1.4995	1.4865**
Deutsche Mark	1.6968	1.7009**
Swiss Franc	1.4415	1.4422**
French Franc	5.7810	5.7939
Japanese Yen	106.12	106.31
European Currency Unit	1.1350	1.1350**

** USD Per STG
* European Opening: 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates: Dates: 21/3/1994

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.3750	3.6250	3.8750	4.4375
Sterling Pound	4.9375	4.9375	4.9375	5.0625
Deutsche Mark	5.6875	5.5625	5.3750	5.2500
Swiss Franc	3.3750	3.7500	3.6875	3.6875
French Franc	6.1250	6.0000	5.8750	5.7500
Japanese Yen	2.0000	2.1250	2.1250	2.1375
European Currency Unit	6.3500	6.1200	6.0000	5.8700

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals: Dates: 21/3/1994

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	366.05	7.55	Silver	5.39	0.120

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin: Dates: 21/3/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7010	0.7030
Sterling Pound	1.0420	1.0472
Deutsche Mark	0.4122	0.4143
Swiss Franc	0.4856	0.4882
French Franc	0.1210	0.1216
Japanese Yen	0.6589	0.6622
Dutch Guilder	0.3670	0.3688
Swedish Krona	0.0417	0.0419
Italian Lira	0.0417	0.0419
Belgian Franc	0.0417	0.0419

* Per 100

Other Currencies: Dates: 21/3/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8380	1.8560
Lebanese Lira	0.040520	0.041675
Saudi Riyal	0.1866	0.1875
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3250	2.3550
Qatari Riyal	0.1903	0.1912
Egyptian Pound	0.2050	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7870	1.8140
UAE Dirham	0.1903	0.1912
Greek Drachma	0.2675	0.3155
Cypriot Pound	1.3235	1.3870

* Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	Canadian dollar
1.6668/78	Deutschemarks
1.6980/90	Dutch guilders
1.9074/84	Swiss francs
1.4382/92	Belgian francs
34.98/02	French francs
5.7832/82	Italian lire
1678.6/0.1	Japanese yen
106.28/38	Swedish crowns
7.8876/76	Norwegian crowns
7.3630/80	Danish crowns
6.6565/15	
51.4829/39	
One sterling	1.6668/78
One ounce of gold	\$386.60/387.10

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Seoul prepares for war games

SEOUL (R) — South Korea said Monday it would resume preparations for war games with the United States in the face of a renewed threat from defiant North Korea to walk out of a global pact limiting the spread of nuclear arms.

At an emergency cabinet meeting, President Kim Young-Sam said the timing for this year's "Team Spirit" manoeuvres would be decided when he returned from trips to Japan and China from March 24 to 30, a presidential spokesman said.

Team Spirit, regularly denounced by the North as a rehearsal for an invasion, was provisionally suspended just a few weeks ago as part of an effort to persuade North Korea to end its nuclear standoff with the West.

Mr. Kim also ordered his ministers to consult the United States about the early deployment of U.S. Patriot air defence missiles around key sites in South Korea.

Seoul, a bare 50 kilometres from the tense border, is highly vulnerable to missile attack. A senior government official, quoted by the domestic Yonhap News Agency, said three dozen Patriot launchers, each of which contains four missiles, were expected to be deployed next month.

The isolated and increasing defiant North Monday again threatened to pull out of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

The North's Foreign Ministry made the threat in a statement issued on the day Pyongyang and Washington were to have reopened discussions aimed at resolving the crisis over the Salimist state's suspected nuclear weapons plans.

The U.S. government called off the talks after North Korea barred visiting U.N. experts from inspecting some of its nuclear sites and failed to agree with the South on an exchange of envoys to discuss detente.

The North walked out of a meeting with the South Saturday, warning of war.

During the meeting, North Korea's chief delegate issued a grim warning that the North was prepared to answer back with talks for talks or with war for war.

The statement rang alarms bells across South Korea. Many analysts think North Korea's threat of attack is probably a bluff, but so little is known about the insular North Korean leadership that no officials want to call them.

South Korea's main opposition Democratic Party said it was not appropriate for Seoul and Washington to hastily decide to resume Team Spirit exercises and deploy the Patriots because the moves could provoke the North.

"To resolve the nuclear issue, the three parties — South and North Korea and the United States — should not give up their dialogue," the statement said.

Monday's North Korean statement said Pyongyang had abided by its side of a Feb. 25 agreement with Washington aimed at defusing the nuclear

inspections row. It said the high-level bilateral meeting should have taken place.

If Washington avoids talks with the North and resort to strongarm politics, the North will have no alternative but to abandon the non-proliferation treaty, it said.

The Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) scheduled a meeting that could decide to refer North Korea's intransigence to the U.N. Security Council for further action.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Sunday that Washington would seek U.N. action to force North Korea to open its nuclear facilities to inspection, predicting China, North Korea's main ally, would go along with the initiative.

North Korea insists its nuclear programme is only for peaceful purposes, but its rejection of full inspections has heightened suspicions that it is developing a nuclear arsenal.

President Bill Clinton, arriving in Miami for a meeting on health care and other issues, told reporters North Korea could still avoid U.N. sanctions and said the United States was not trying to escalate tensions between both countries.

"I'm not trying to ratchet up the tension. I'm just trying to work through this in a very deliberate but very firm and disciplined way," Mr. Clinton said. "We just have to see what they do now. We have been entirely reasonable and forthcoming."

Asked if sanctions could be

averted, Mr. Clinton said, "of course they can." He said the decision was up to North Korea, but added, "We also have some hope that they (North Korea) will go forward."

Speaking on the CBS Television programme "face the nation," Mr. Christopher said possible moves could include trade sanctions as part of an international effort to force compliance.

"I think we'll be preparing for trade sanctions, but exactly what happens in the U.N. we'll have to see what happens next week," Mr. Christopher said. In Washington, top Republican and Democrats said Washington must not let up the pressure. They also backed recent moves to provide South Korea with Patriot anti-missile batteries.

"I think if the United Nations Commission says tomorrow that they have not complied, we should go ahead with the Patriot missiles and the military exercises with the South Koreans," House of Representatives majority leader Richard Gephardt said on the NBC programme Meet The Press.

Senate Republican leader Bob Dole, of Kansas, told the same programme he supported deployment of the Patriot batteries, "and we may want to beef up our own forces there." Mr. Gephardt, a Missouri Democrat, added that the United States should also deploy aircraft carriers in the region.



African National Congress (ANC) supporters flee teargas, shot by South African soldiers to separate

ANC and Inkatha supporters after an election rally held by the ANC at the Kwa-Mashu stadium (AFP photo)

De Klerk, Mandela discuss Kwazulu campaign violence

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — President F.W. de Klerk and ANC leader Nelson Mandela met with election officials Monday to discuss mounting conflict in the Kwazulu black homeland over South Africa's first all-race election.

Fighting between African National Congress (ANC) supporters and Zulu nationalists erupted Sunday in several parts of Kwazulu.

Police reported 29 deaths in scattered incidents, including several clashes between police and armed residents. But the police account of some incidents differed from versions provided by ANC officials and peace monitors interviewed by the Associated Press.

Zulu leaders want an autonomous Zulu state and have threatened to scuttle voting in Kwazulu, the traditional homeland located in Natal province on the east coast of South Africa.

Mr. De Klerk and Mr. Mandela insist that people must be free to campaign and vote throughout the nation in the April 26-28 election, the first in which the black majority will participate.

Mr. Mandela's ANC is favoured to win and lead the first post-apartheid government.

On two consecutive weekends, supporters of Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini and his uncle, Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, have occupied stadiums in Kwazulu to prevent the ANC from holding election rallies.

Monday's meeting with election officials indicated Mr. Mandela and Mr. De Klerk were studying how to react. ANC officials have called for South African forces to provide security for campaigning and the election.

There was no statement from the meeting, and none of the officials involved offered immediate comments.

Earlier this month, South African troops and police went to the Bophuthatswana black homeland to restore order after widespread strikes and protests against homeland leader Lucas Mangope, who also was refusing to allow free campaigning. Two days after the South African forces arrived, Mr. De Klerk's government and the ANC ousted Mr. Mangope and assumed joint control of the homeland.

Negotiations involving the government, ANC and Zulu leaders are continuing and international mediation of the

dispute has been proposed, but tension has increased in the past week.

At least 29 people, including four ANC officials, were killed in South Africa's powderkeg Natal province at the weekend, police and the ANC said Monday.

Police said unknown gunmen killed four ANC officials at Ndeleni black township, near Richmond in the Natal midlands Sunday afternoon. One of the victims was Mzwandile Mbongwe, an information officer for the ANC Natal midlands region, said police spokesman Captain Henry Bhandram.

ANC officials said three people were shot dead in Umlazi black township outside Durban Monday morning. Umlazi ANC official Mfanafathi Mhlungu said the three were killed by hostel residents from a nearby male hostel.

Violence monitors said they did not consider the weekend toll of 29 exceptional.

ANC Southern Natal spokesman Roy Ainslie said five people were killed in Ndwedwe near Tongaat north of Durban and at least 26 houses were burned down. These people were killed in Bhamabai squatter settlement outside Durban.

Rebels harass Cambodian troops around Pailin

SVAY SOR, Cambodia (R) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas harassed government units around the rebels' gem-mining base of Pailin Monday although the area was under complete army control, an army general said.

Deputy Chief of Staff General Pol Saroun told reporters at a base 24 kilometres from the front the guerrillas had split their forces into small groups to carry out ambushes and harrying actions from surrounding hills.

A government helicopter pilot in Battambang said his aircraft had come under mortar attack in the morning while loading casualties from Pailin town, forcing him to make an emergency takeoff.

The pilot said he took out three dead and 19 wounded government personnel.

In neighbouring Thailand, the manager of a Thai gem-mining company who fled back to Thailand Sunday said the government army had apparently occupied Pailin town Saturday afternoon, as the government has claimed, sending thousands of refugees fleeing to Thailand.

A Reuters news crew in the Thai province of Chantaburi near the border saw a convoy of vehicles including trucks, motorcycles and bicycles arriving from Cambodia.

Handfuls of unarmed Khmer Rouge guerrillas were among the estimated 15,000 civilians, most of them family of Khmer Rouge soldiers, trekking into Thailand.

"It was technical pull-back, we will return soon," said a Khmer Rouge soldier on a forest track on the Thai side of the border. He refused to say any more.

Thailand, which vehemently denies assisting the rebels, has said it would allow unarmed Cambodians to cross into Thailand purely on humanitarian grounds.

The refugees, including the unarmed guerrillas, were occupying old base areas on the Thai side of the frontier from where the Khmer Rouge waged a guerrilla war against Vietnamese and Phnom Penh government forces for more than a decade.

The Khmer Rouge captured Pailin in October 1989, a month after Vietnamese troops pulled out of Cambodia.

Meanwhile, Cambodia's King Norodom Sihanouk is out of hospital after cancer therapy and will return to his homeland in time for its April 13 new year. But not before a call on "best friend" North Korean strongman Kim Il-Sung.

"His Majesty Norodom Sihanouk has left the hospital and his health is good," the king's spokesman said Monday from King Sihanouk's walled residence in Beijing.

Balladur weathers vote test despite rally by left

PARIS (R) — Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, after a year in power marred by labour unrest, weathered his first electoral test comfortably in local polls at the weekend.

In spite of recession, record unemployment and street protests, the parties in his coalition won 44.7 per cent of the votes cast, for more than two thousands local councillors throughout France.

The coalition's performance was slightly better than in the March 1993 general election and the only cloud for Mr. Balladur and his allies was a modest upturn in the fortunes of the opposition Socialists, swept from power in a resounding defeat a year ago.

Final figures showed the Socialists and their allies won 28.8 per cent, up from 20 per cent last year. Mainly because of a swing by young voters away from the faction-ridden ecologists.

The Communist Party received 11.5 per cent, the extreme-right National Front 9.8 per cent and the Ecologists 3.5 per cent.

"The right easily dominates. The left climbs back," read a headline in the conservative newspaper Le Figaro.

"Everyone's happy," the left-wing daily Liberation said on its front page.

Mr. Balladur, in typically understated style, acknowledged that the result was "not negative" and even "very encouraging."

Protest voters make comeback in German polls

BONN (R) — Voters in Schleswig-Holstein state jolted Germany's mainstream politicians, who had appeared to be maintaining their grip on power, by flocking to small protest parties in elections for local assemblies.

The Social Democrats (SPD) stayed narrowly ahead of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU), scoring 39.5 per cent of votes to the CDU's 37.5 per cent in Sunday's local state elections, official results showed.

But the real winners in a vote holding extra significance in a year of 19 polls culminating in October's general election were the ecologist alliance 90/Greens and small local parties.

The Greens improved 4.3 percentage points on their result of four years ago to poll 10.3 per cent while the SPD fell back 3.4 per cent points and the CDU dropped 3.8 points.

"If this really was a test vote it stands for the fact that the voter is no longer indifferent to what 'those up there' are doing," national ZDF Television news commented.

"The protest has become clear as day... and unmistakably the Greens are on the crest of the protest wave."

While the SPD could console itself that it remained the strongest party at local level, the result gave little comfort to Mr. Kohl's CDU, well beaten

"Some people wanted these elections to be a test for the government. Well, the test has been made," he told Europe 1 Radio.

Socialist leader Michel Rocard bailed "a new era" for the left. Declaring: "The good times are over for the right. The bad times are over for the left."

Mr. Rocard, laying the foundations for a presidential bid next year, said that with about 40 per cent of the vote, the left was on its way to regaining a majority.

"The left is half-way there," he told France-Inter Radio. "Considering the state we were in after the terrible defeat of March 1993, I think the rebound has largely begun."

Political commentators said the result was heartening for the Socialists without worrying for the ruling coalition of the conservative Gaullist Rally For the Republic (RPR) and the centre-right Union for French Democracy (UDF).

"There are no great losers. It was a success for the government. A success that wasn't entirely foreseeable. There are no great upheavals, which is why everybody is more or less satisfied," the TF1 channel's Gerard Carreyrou said.

About 60 per cent of the 18.5 million eligible voters turned out to elect local councillors in mainland France's 95 departments, in charge of public services mainly in rural areas.

by the SPD in the more significant state assembly elections in lower Saxony a week ago.

That poll, while confirming the rise of the Greens, seemed to show that voters were not as disillusioned as many politicians had feared with continuing scandals in the mainstream parties and their inability to banish a recession.

The local CDU chief in Schleswig-Holstein, Ottfried Hennig, said the vote "reflects the percentages we are getting at national level." The party's national general secretary, Peter Hintze, called it "unsatisfactory."

SPD State Premier Heide Simonis saw a wider message for all the main parties. "It seems most citizens in this country are convinced that we politicians are not dealing with their real concerns but sitting around all day staring at files," she said.

For their part, the Greens refused to see themselves as just a catch-all protest party alongside the local groupings which more than trebled their tally to 3.9 per cent from 1.2 per cent four years ago.

"Those who voted Green showed they wanted ecological policies of social reform — and that they wanted to show support for a red-green coalition (with the SPD) at national level," state party Chairman Rainder Steenblock said. "To that end, this result was a dream start."

After strong aftershock, L.A. tries to bounce back

LOS ANGELES (R) — Disaster-weary Los Angeles struggle Monday to bounce back from a powerful aftershock to January's devastating earthquake that caused further damage to homes, freeways and residents' nerves.

Sunday's quake, which registered 5.3 on the Richter Scale and was felt throughout southern California, disrupted power to 75,000 customers, sent people fleeing in terror from shopping malls and movie theatres and ignited major fires.

It briefly interrupted rehearsals for Monday night's Academy Awards, shaking the rafters violently and knocking over stage props.

But just as the Oscar crew and cast vowed that "the show must go on," so did state transportation managers and school officials as life in Los Angeles slowly began returning to normal.

The quake hit at 1:21 p.m. PST (21:21 GMT) Sunday near the suburb of Panorama City, it was the third-strongest of more than 6,000 aftershocks to rumble through the region since the Jan. 17 quake that killed 60 people and caused up to \$20 billion in damage.

Within minutes, several major fires erupted, destroying a three-store shopping centre and severely damaging a power-generating plant in the quake-ravaged San Fernando Valley.

A man died of a heart attack shortly after the tremors struck.

Only two injuries were reported: A man who was rushed to a local hospital suffering from chest pains and a woman who was trapped under a fallen bookcase in her apartment.

Shanghai dissident detained as Hosokawa visits

SHANGHAI (R) — A Chinese dissident fighting for compensation from Japan for wartime atrocities was detained in Shanghai Monday during a visit by Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa, a family member said.

Bao Ge, a teacher at the Shanghai Medical School, was taken from outside his home by police shortly before Mr. Hosokawa's arrival from Beijing, the relative said.

His arrest drew attention to the vexed questions of Japanese war crimes and human rights, two issues that have been diplomatically swept under the carpet during the Japanese premier's visit to the country.

Mr. Bao wrote an open letter to Mr. Hosokawa last week in which he demanded compensation for wartime atrocities and called on the Japanese prime minister to press for democracy in China.

"If Japan does not publicly apologise and pay compensation for the war to China then the so-called 'Sino-Japanese

friendship' is hypocritical and unstable," the letter said. "We not only hope that Japan will supply experience for China's experiment with a market economy but also hope it will exert more influence on the struggle for greater democratic rights for the Chinese people," the letter said.

Japanese troops occupied vast tracts of China, including Shanghai, during World War II and were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians.

China agreed not to seek compensation from Japan for wartime losses when the two countries re-established diplomatic relations in 1972.

However, relations between the Asian neighbours are still fraught with underlying tension as a result of China's lingering sense of national humiliation and Japan's feelings of guilt, according to Western diplomats.

Chinese dissidents have picked up on the issue of compensation from Japan as part of their wider campaign for human rights, and Chinese au-

thorities fear it could become a rallying point for anti-government protest.

In Beijing at least two people tried to distribute leaflets in Tiananmen Square Monday, but the apparent political protest was quickly smothered by police.

It was not known what the pamphlets said or whether the incident was linked to Mr. Hosokawa's visit.

Mr. Hosokawa arrived in Shanghai Monday morning for a half-day visit en route from Beijing to Tokyo.

He visited Shanghai's new development zone in Pudong, a manufacturing base for several high-technology Japanese companies, and crossed a newly-built suspension bridge over the Huangpu River before having lunch with Mayor Huang Ju.

The Japanese prime minister has avoided controversy over human rights during his visit to China, which closely followed a trip by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who berated Beijing's leader on their rights record.

The peacekeepers pulled back after Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic threatened to shoot or bomb Canadian positions, the Canadian Press news agency said.

Lt-Gen. Sir Michael Rose ordered the Canadians to surround the guns to force Serbs to start serious talks on their removal. Serb leaders were to discuss the issue Monday with senior officers of the U.N. Bosnian Command.

Maj. McDowell acknowledged that other heavy guns — six Serb Howitzers — also remained within the zone and suggested the United Nations had given up on trying to get them removed.

"As far as Gen. Rose is concerned, they don't have the range to reach here," he told reporters. "As far as he is concerned they are under our control."

Two shooting incidents in southwest of Sarajevo added to the tensions. A Swedish peacekeeper was slightly wounded Sunday by Serb small arms fire near Mount Igman and French U.N. soldiers returned Serb gunfire near Jablanica.

Madonna gets third 'worst actress' award

LOS ANGELES (R) — In a ceremony spoofing the 1993 Academy Awards just a day before Hollywood's biggest bash, Indecent Proposal was chosen the worst film and Madonna and Burt Reynolds were named the worst stars. Indecent Proposal took three Razzies — for worst picture, Worst screenplay and worst supporting actor at the 14th annual Golden Raspberry Awards. Madonna's Razzie, her third, was worst actress for the mystery film Body Of Evidence. Burt Reynolds got the worst actor prize for "His Flat-Footed, Dimwitted Star Turn" in Cop And A Half.

Bostonians stage St Patrick's Day motorcade

BOSTON (R) — Residents of predominantly Irish American South Boston staged a St Patrick's Day motorcade to try to keep tradition alive after the city's 90-year-old parade was cancelled over a gay rights controversy. The South Boston Allied War Veterans Council, annual St Patrick's Day Parade sponsors since 1947, called it off last week after a court upheld the right of the Irish-American Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Group of Boston to march. Some 200 cars packed with diaphanous celebrants, who blamed gay rights activists for the cancellation, joined the motorcade.

Male worker files sex harassment suit

HOUSTON (R) — A man alleging that female co-workers sexually harassed him has sued Continental Airlines for unspecified damages, according to a federal lawsuit. Vol Stephen Davis III said in the lawsuit that four co-workers and a female supervisor created a hostile atmosphere with complaints about their sex lives and daily lurid remarks. A Continental spokesman declined to comment. The harassment allegedly began in January 1993 and included one incident where lingerie was shown around the office accompanied by sexually suggestive comments.

Chinese figures show bilateral trade in 1993 at \$39 billion, an increase of 54 per cent over 1992.

As of the end of September 1993, Japanese investment in China was \$5.17 billion, one third of it made since April 1992, Mr. Hosokawa said.

Sato, Chouinard beat favourites at world figure skating championships

CHIBA, Japan (R) — Japan's Yuka Sato and Canadian Josee Chouinard upset the frontrunners for the women's world figure skating title Monday by winning their qualifying groups.

The two, considered contenders for minor medals, proved themselves candidates for the major prize alongside favourites Chen Lu of China and European champion Surya Bonaly of France.

Chouinard, ninth at last month's Olympics, beat bronze medalist Chen into second place in the opening group. Then in the second group Sato, fifth in Norway, defeated four-times European champion Bonaly, who finished a place above her last month.

Sato, a 21-year-old from Tokyo, survived a fall on a triple loop jump to get the top marks in her section, but said she was saving something for later in the week.

"I felt I didn't put everything into it today because if I did and then went into the real thing, it would be more difficult," she said.

"So I held back a bit. It's difficult psychologically. But I

tried. "How do I feel about finishing first? It's too soon for rejoicing yet," she said.

A second attempt at a triple loop almost came off. But she two-footed the landing and could not do a combination she had planned.

"I have a lot to do before the final. I have to pace myself," added Sato.

The women's main competition begins with the technical programme Friday and ends with Saturday's free skating.

The 20-year-old Bonaly, who has never won a medal in Olympic or world championships despite her four European titles, did not fall on any of her jumps but fouled a triple lutz and some of her other triples were uncertain.

She could not match Sato artistically.

Tanja Szwedzenko of Germany was third in the group, ahead of Russian Olga Markova.

American 13-year-old Michelle Kwan was fifth on a mixed day for the two U.S. substitutes.

Kwan replaced Olympics silver medalist Nancy Kerrigan

and looked well-prepared but Nicole Bobek, called up only last week in place of Tonya Harding, fared badly and placed 13th in the other group, failing by one position to qualify for the main event.

She said she had not had enough time to be fully ready.

Bobek's group was won in a fine comeback performance from Chouinard, whose routine included two excellent triple lutz jumps after she missed that jump twice during the Olympics.

"I feel better with myself but it's really hard to forgive myself for Norway," she said. "I had been landing the lutz so well for two weeks before that competition."

Cheo continued to struggle against a foot injury and made mistakes on both her triple lutz attempts, failing on one of them and doubling out of the other.

Third in the last two world championships and again last month, she could struggle to improve her position here despite the absence of the two who beat her in Norway, Kerrigan and Olympic champion Oksana Baiul.

Schneider wins slalom; Tomba takes title

VAIL, Colo. (AP) — In an impromptu victory celebration, a member of the Italian team staff dumped a large bowl of ice over Alberto Tomba. A few hours later, Vreni Schneider dumped cold water over every one of her rivals.

Tomba's triumph came via a race cancellation Sunday, but Schneider's was achieved with the same relentless style that has been her trademark.

Schneider collected her third medal of the World Cup finals, winning the women's slalom by a huge margin.

It was the 30th World Cup slalom victory of Schneider's remarkable career. Paired with her 20 giant-slam wins and one combined win, she raised her victory total to 51 — second only to the 62 of Austria's Annemarie Moser-Proell.

"It hasn't been as easy as it might have looked," Schneider said. "It's been a long season and I'm very tired, but today I said it's all or nothing. I was determined to throw myself down the mountain and see what happened. I wanted to finish the season on a winning note."

The men's slalom, meanwhile, was cancelled because of deteriorating course conditions.

The cancellation gave the men's slalom title to Tomba, the flamboyant Italian who came into the final event with a substantial lead in the standings over Thomas Stangassinger of Austria. Tomba led Stangassinger by 88 points (540-452) and could have finished as low as 15th and still won the title, even if Stangassinger had won the race.

Tomba, who gained the sixth World Cup title of his career, agreed with the decision to cancel.

"The snow was way too soft," he said. "Asked if he felt he had backed into the title, he said, 'Remember, I was in front by 88 points.'"

"I would like to have raced because I didn't ski well in the giant slalom (finishing 14th Saturday)," Tomba said. "But I won four slaloms and was sometimes second or third in the giant slalom, so it was a good season for me."

Sampras overcomes ailment, Agassi to claim Lipton title

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (R) — Pete Sampras, top seed and defending champion at the \$3.3 million Lipton Championships, overcame a stomach upset to beat Andre Agassi in the final and retain his crown Sunday.

Sampras, who came close to defaulting the match, beat Agassi 5-7, 6-3, 6-3, and collected the \$242,000 winner's share.

Agassi, on the comeback trail from injury, earned \$128,000 as runner-up raised his world ranking from 31 to 19 and boosted his reputation for good sportsmanship by not insisting on a default.

The start of the match was delayed an hour as Sampras struggled to overcome a stomach ailment, and rumours swirled that he would be unable to play. At the 1992 U.S. Open, Sampras experienced similar problems in his semifinal with Jim Courier, but won that match, too.

Against Agassi here, Sampras slowly worked his way into the match, ultimately delivering a virtuoso performance that included four aces in the final game.

Under the rules, Sampras should have defaulted for failing to start the match on time but Agassi agreed to wait an hour to allow his opponent time to recover.

The decision may have cost Agassi the title, but he said afterwards that cancelling the match was out of the question. "It wasn't too complicated a

decision," Agassi said. "If you can't beat the best player in the world you don't deserve to take the trophy. You certainly don't deserve it if you can't beat him when he's sick."

Sampras certainly appreciated the gesture although it took him two hours and 14 minutes to close out the victory after a slew of double-faults marred his early progress.

"That showed a lot of class," he said of Agassi's decision. "That's something I'll never forget."

Sampras has now won four titles this year and is unbeaten in 12 of his last 13 finals. He is the first player to win back-to-back titles at the Lipton Championships.

Agassi has made an impressive comeback after a five-month layoff and wrist surgery in December. He won his first tournament back, in Scottsdale, Arizona, in February, and now has an 11-2 win-loss record for the year.

Agassi began the match with an ace but it was Sampras, although moving in slow motion, who made fewer errors to lead 5-2. Agassi quickly cut that lead as Sampras double-faulted on his only set point at 5-4. Agassi, taking five games in a row, won the set 7-5 with a backhand stop volley.

Agassi lost the momentum quickly in the second set, dropping serve in the opening game. This time, Sampras held on to his lead, as his serve and forehand began to find their mark, and won the set 6-3.

breaking serve when Agassi volleyed long.

The two Americans had played patchy tennis in the first two sets, marked by intermittent aces and double faults, but then Sampras raised the level of his game. He took a 3-0 lead that was never challenged by Agassi, then served his ninth and tenth aces of the match to lead 5-2.

Agassi refused to go quietly, holding serve at love for 5-3 with two aces of his own, but Sampras wasted no time in closing out the victory in the next game.

After three straight aces from Sampras, Agassi used a forehand return to save one match point, but Sampras delivered his 14th ace to win the match 6-3.

"When I woke up this morning I didn't think I was going to be able to play," said Sampras, who needed intravenous treatment. "I had IV's in me from 10:45 to 12:30."

During the warm-up, the thought of not playing was still in Sampras's mind.

"If I played four games and couldn't go any longer, I was going to quit," Sampras said. "I just told myself to hang in there and as the match went I started to feel a little better."

Agassi said that the Sampras he faced on court was very different to the one he visited in the doctor's office prior to the match.

"He looked a lot worse than he did in the third set," Agassi said.



Pete Sampras

Agassi said that Sampras's physical condition distracted him at first.

"I was really delayed in getting into it and that kind of bothered me," Agassi said. "When at 5-2 I realised whether he's sick or not, I'm really getting an ass-kicking out there."

Payton leads Supersonics past Hornets

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (R) — Gary Payton scored a career-high 32 points and dished out eight assists and Sean Kemp had a triple-double as the elite Seattle Supersonics beat the desperate Charlotte Hornets 124-115 late Sunday.

The win raised Seattle's record to 47-17, best in the NBA, while Charlotte (28-35) fell to 4 1/2 games behind New Jersey for the last playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Kemp had 15 points, 11 rebounds and 12 assists for his first triple double of the season. Kendall Gill, in his first game at Charlotte since being traded by the Hornets to Seattle in the off-season, scored 22 points.

In Boston, Kevin Willis scored 31 points and grabbed 14 rebounds to pace the Atlanta Hawks to an easy 101-80 victory over the Celtics.

The Hawks improved to 45-19 and are tied with the New York Knicks for the best record in the Eastern Conference.

Xavier McDaniel scored 18 points for the Celtics, who have lost six straight and 19 of their last 21 games.

At Los Angeles, Sedale Threatt scored 30 points, including a clutch 18-footer with 49 seconds remaining, as the Lakers held off the Orlando Magic 97-91.

Elden Campbell added 20 points and Nick Van Exel had 19 for the Lakers, who won for the fifth time in their last seven games and remained 5 1/2 games behind Denver in the battle for the final Western Conference playoff spot.

In Denver, Mahmoud Abdul Rauf scored 23 points before joining the other Nuggets starters laughing on the bench in a 132-99 rout of the undermanned Washington Bullets.

Rex Chapman poured a career-high 39 points to pace the Bullets (19-46), who lost their fifth straight game and were without starting centre Pervis Ellison due to a knee injury.

In Los Angeles, Dominique Wilkins scored 26 points and Elmore Spencer added 24 to power the Clippers past the Portland Trail Blazers 114-110.

The win was the Clippers' fifth in their last six games.

Harvey Grant scored 28 to pace Portland, which has lost

five of its last six games and five straight on the road.

In Milwaukee, Vin Baker's dunk with 12 seconds left lifted the Bucks to a 103-101 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers, their 18th win in 19 games.

Eric Murdock forced the badly away from the Sixers' Tim Perry and fed inside to Baker for the game-winner. The Bucks had climbed back into the game when two 3-pointers, from Brad Lohaus keyed an 8-0 run to tie the game at 95-95.

Blue Edwards scored 23 points, Murdock 18 and Jon Barry 17 for the Bucks, who snapped a six-game losing streak.

At Minnesota, Horace Grant scored 18 points to lead a balanced attack as the Chicago Bulls beat the Timberwolves 90-80, improving their perfect career dominance to 10-0.

Chicago has won five straight games and six of seven since a season-high five-game losing streak.

Scottie Pippen scored 14 points and grabbed 11 rebounds for the Bulls.

Another highlight was Saturday's spectacular and humorous doubles match, which teamed Connors and Borg against McEnroe and John Lloyd.

Connors played part of the match wearing one shoe, and McEnroe hit the ball while sitting and lying on the court and shook hands with the ball boys.

The rivals exchanged jokes and partners. By the end of the match, Connors left his partner alone and sat in the middle of the court. Still, he and Borg won.

The match crowned a two-day champions' challenge event, which brought together some of the all-time great tennis champions.

On Saturday, McEnroe defeated Swedish legend Bjorn

McEnroe beats Connors

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia (AP) — John McEnroe defeated old rival Jimmy Connors 6-1, 6-3 Sunday in an emotional final of an exhibition tournament.

Borg and Connors beat colourful Romanian Ilie Nastase.

Temper ran high during the match, watched by about 6,000 tennis fans at the St. Petersburg Yubliney Sports Complex. The two Americans, both eager to win, freely uttered obscenities after missed shots.

The match crowned a two-day champions' challenge event, which brought together some of the all-time great tennis champions.

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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A53 ♥316 ♠AKJ4 ♠AKJ7
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?
A.—What an ugly hand! You have a balanced 18 points with both minors triply stopped and no stopper in the majors. However, if you don't act now, your side might never get into the auction. Bid one no trump.

Q.2—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠9 ♠Q1055 ♠AKQ86
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ Pass 1 ♣ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—There are hands where we would rebid one no trump with a singleton in partner's suit, but only if there is no alternative. Here, the salient feature of this holding is the excellent club suit and we would highlight that by rebidding two clubs.

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠776 ♠QJ9765 ♠K ♠772
Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond?
A.—It is tempting to introduce your six-card major, but the hand is not quite strong enough for a two-over-one response. You have good support for partner's suit and a ruffing value in diamonds, so we would opt for a raise to two spades.

Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AK7852 ♠K102 ♠2 ♠A108

The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ Pass 1 ♣ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—You can bet that the enemy has a laydown game, possibly even a slam. Therefore, you should increase the level of the preempt and it's just a question of how high. Six diamonds is a bit rich—the opponents might be happy to settle for a penalty double. Our choice would be five diamonds, which leaves West with the problem of whether we have a good hand or are trying to pull a fast one.

Q.5—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠32 ♠Q9765 ♠Q865 ♠K6
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ Pass 1 ♣ Pass
What action do you take?
A.—You can bet that the enemy has a laydown game, possibly even a slam. Therefore, you should increase the level of the preempt and it's just a question of how high. Six diamonds is a bit rich—the opponents might be happy to settle for a penalty double. Our choice would be five diamonds, which leaves West with the problem of whether we have a good hand or are trying to pull a fast one.

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AK9843 ♠102 ♠AK4 ♠A10
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one diamond. What action do you take?
A.—You have a good hand and a six-card suit, but neither the strength of the hand nor the quality of the suit merits first doubling and then bidding your suit. Overall one spade. If partner can't act, you won't be missing game.

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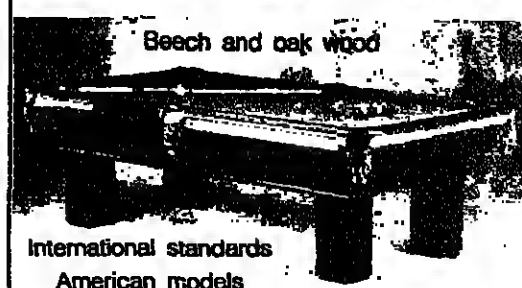
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	Jean-Claude Van Damme HARD TARGET Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Adel Emam in TERRORIST Shows: 10:00, 12:30, 3:00, 5:00, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD '1' DEMOLITION MAN Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' ACCIDENTAL HERO Shows: 12:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:15		Opening Soon A political comedy Forbidden X Forbidden		Watch for the surprise — The next play....		Since the actors are abroad the theatre is closed It will re-open on April 6, 1994 for two weeks in the last performances of: "Arab Summit Conference"	

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NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Armed Forces

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday sent a message to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Mirai congratulating him and the Armed Forces over the 26th anniversary of Al Karameh Battle. King Hussein wished the Armed Forces personnel good luck and success in performing their duties, imploring God to protect them and to grant Jordan victory.

Saudis to give Palestinians \$20m

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia has said it will pay \$20 million to help Palestinians set up development, health care and social facilities in the Israeli occupied territories. The official Saudi Press Agency on Sunday night quoted Finance and Economy Minister Mohammad Abul Khail as saying the payment will be made in coordination with the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). An UNRWA team is expected soon in the kingdom to discuss the arrangements. SPA said the \$20 million was part of Saudi pledges to give Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip \$100 million to help them set up a self-rule authority.

'Iranian plane could have been spying'

MOSCOW (R) — An Iranian transport plane which crashed in the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, killing all 32 people aboard, could have been on a spying mission, ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Russian military experts as saying on Monday. The experts said no one had answered the main question as to why the C-130 Hercules, carrying relatives of Iranian embassy staff, left its planned route and flew over Karabakh. The plane crashed on Thursday near the Karabakh capital Stepanakert. "What was it that made the Iranian pilots, who knew it was dangerous to fly at medium altitude above a battleground, head for Stepanakert and subsequently for the strategically important Lachin corridor?" the agency said. TASS also quoted "competent sources" as saying the 19-strong crew was exceptionally large for a plane that size.

Egypt police kill 6 suspects

ASSIUT (AP) — Police killed six suspected militants in a running battle that began with an attack the night before that left four police dead. The battles stepped up the almost daily violence in the province that is a stronghold of radicals trying to topple Egypt's secular government and impose strict Islamic rule on the country. Security sources said Interior Minister Hassan Al Ali, the country's top policeman, on Monday ordered 3,000 officers and men from Cairo into Assiut to take over three of its most violence-ridden towns. On Sunday, four policemen and two extremist suspects were killed in separate confrontations in the village of Sidfa, near Abu Tig where Monday's incident erupted. Both villages are south of the provincial capital, Assiut.

Kuwait denies reported Iraqi offer

KUWAIT (AP) — Kuwait Monday denied that Iraq had offered to swap hundreds of Kuwaiti prisoners for 11 Iraqis on trial here for allegedly plotting to kill former President George Bush. The minister of state for cabinet affairs, Abdul Aziz Al Dakheel, told Al Anba daily the reported exchange offer was a "manoeuvre by Baghdad's ruling regime" aimed at creating confusion. An aide confirmed his denial. "The (prisoners) are not up for bargains or barter," Mr. Dakheel told the newspaper. "Kuwait considers them its most important issue and will spare to means in securing their return."

Bosphorus traffic back to normal

ISTANBUL (R) — Navigation through Istanbul's Bosphorus waterway returned to normal on Monday, eight days after it was disrupted by a tanker collision and fire, officials said. "The first oil tanker passed through last night," a pilotage authority official said. "As of this morning (Monday), traffic is back to normal both ways." He said 248 ships had transited the 30-kilometre long strait since it reopened on Friday.

Rafsanjani calls on exiles to return

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's President Hashemi Rafsanjani, fighting an uphill battle with a depressed economy worsened by a dearth of expertise, has appealed to Iranians abroad to return home with their skills. In a message on the Iranian new year which began Sunday, Mr. Rafsanjani called on his countrymen abroad to "strengthen their relations with home." He said Iranians living outside the country were unaware of Iran's political, social and economic strides since the 1979 Islamic revolution. The Islamic Republic News Agency said his message expressed hope that Iranians would make their judgements about Iran based on "more information and will volunteer to offer their services at this time of reconstruction."

Somali meeting set for today

NAIROBI (R) — Somali faction leaders will hold their delayed public reconciliation meeting on Tuesday — or the United Nations will refuse to pay their hotel bills, a U.N. spokesman said on Monday. George Bennett, spokesman for the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), said the meeting would be held on Tuesday attended by rivals Mohammad Farah Aidede and self-styled President Ali Mahdi Mohammad. "Somali faction leaders had not reached agreement on details of their declaration. That is why there was a delay from Sunday," Mr. Bennett told a news briefing. "If the factions do not make their declaration tomorrow, they can be sure the U.N. will not fund their stay in Nairobi any longer," he added. The factions have been meeting for more than a week. Mr. Bennett said UNOSOM was paying hotel bills for some 60 of the Somali representatives in Nairobi but they did not include General Aidede and his delegation which arrived in Nairobi in December.

Harding bodyguard, 2 others indicted

PORTLAND (R) — A grand jury Monday indicted figure skater Tonya Harding's former bodyguard and two other men on charges stemming from the Jan 6 attack on her rival Nancy Kerrigan. The indictment contends that Harding and her former husband Jeff Gillooly, who have pleaded guilty in plea bargains, also were involved in the plot to injure Kerrigan and knock her out of the U.S. figure skating championships.

German minister demands expulsion of Kurds

BONN (R) — German Interior Minister Manfred Kanther on Monday urged regional authorities to expel militant Kurds who took part in violent demonstrations at the weekend in support of their homeland's independence from Turkey. But Kurdish groups in Berlin, Nuremberg and Hamburg announced further demonstrations on Monday to keep up their protest against Turkey's use of force against separatists. Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel sent a telegram to Ankara asking Turkish authorities to guarantee freedom of movement for observers after a German group trying to monitor human rights in the Kurdish region was detained. The group was expected back on Monday after being harassed and detained by security forces. Bonn's foreign ministry said it had received assurances that this would not happen again. On Sunday, some 6,000 Kurds rampaged through the southern German town of Augsburg hurling firebombs and blockaded a motorway with buses and fires for more hours after authorities barred them from holding a rally which had been declared illegal.

Palestinian activists form rights panel

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Fearful of the emergence of a repressive Palestinian state, a group of prominent writers, political activists and intellectuals are striving to create an ombudsman to ensure the establishment of a democratic entity. Founders of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens Rights (PICCR) say it will be based in Jerusalem. "We cannot (sit and wait) until a repressive state is established and then start to struggle for an independent and democratic one," said Dr. As'ad Abdul Rahman, director of Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation and a member of the Palestine National Council (PNC). "We are motivated by our national commitment and we hope we will contribute to the establishment of the Palestinian state on a solid foundation of commitment to the principles of human rights, basic freedoms and democracy."

The PICCR is striving to act as an ombudsman (diwan mathaleem: court of grievances) in a democratic Palestine state and whose capital is Jerusalem, Dr. Abdul Rahman said. He noted that there were increased demands to have the commission based in Jerusalem but Israel is resisting this. He said that Jerusalem has always been considered as "our capital and must be thus considered as our base."

Founders say the commission will work to ensure the rule of law, the establishment of legal structures, proposing and reviewing legislation aimed at protecting the citizens' basic rights and freedoms and monitoring the work of the Palestinian national authority to ensure no abuse of authority or misuse of public funds.

"There is a certain kind of an entity that is coming to birth whether we like it or not," Dr. Abdul Rahman said during a seminar Sunday at the Jordanian Writers Association. "The founding board of commissioners will continue to lead the organisation until the elected Palestinian legislative council establishes a permanent board."

The membership of the board of commissioners include Dr. Abdul Rahman, Dr. Ibrahim Abu Lughod, Dr. Mandouh Al Aker, Ms. Lamis Alami, Dr. Nasser Aruri, Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, Mr. Fatch Azzam, Ms. Hanan Bakri, Mr.

Mahmoud Darwish, Dr. Mohammad Hallaj, Dr. Anis Kassim, judge Eugene Cotran, lawyer Ali Safarini, Professor Edward Said and Dr. Iyad Sarraj.

"Many of the members are very well known among Palestinians in the occupied territories and in the diaspora for their experience and knowledge as well as for their views regarding the Palestinian leadership. Palestinian peace delegation spokesman Hanan Ashrawi and PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Darwish, for example, both resigned in protest against the leadership's policy in the Arab-Israeli peace talks," Dr. Abdul Rahman pointed out. Most of the remaining members are prominent professors, writers, or lawyers and are known for their stands, he said.

Dr. Abdul Rahman expects the commission to have protection and support from the Palestinian people and from other human rights organisations. The commission also seeks to broaden the scope of cooperation and coordination among all human rights organisations and institutions in the occupied territories, he said. The commission, which will have financial and administrative independence, will only accept donations and contributions from human rights organisations that are known for their solidarity with the Palestinian people.

The commission will also be entrusted with the task of raising awareness among the public of their rights and duties in their future state. Although Dr. Abdul Rahman confirms that they will also defend Palestinian rights in the diaspora, the commission's work will be firstly confined to Palestinians within the state. He said that the commission strives to be an ombudsman whose task will be focused at the preliminary stage to defend the Palestinian citizens rights but is ready to defend Israel's rights at a later stage when real peace and justice prevail.

"At present they (the Israelis) are considered as colonialist settlers," Dr. Abdul Rahman told the Jordan Times. "Besides, the commission is established on the assumption that they (settlers) are no longer there."

"But if there were real peace, then there would be room for cooperation as it would be the case in all the other domains, economic, political, etc.," Dr. Abdul Rahman said.

Man confesses to killing boy

(Continued from page 1)

their neighbour and he had even volunteered to look for the boy when he disappeared.

"After learning of my son's death, he came to our house to comfort us. He even brought some food with him and attended the funeral," the grief-stricken mother said.

She said that "Abu Ziad" was "the last person any one would suspect of such a heinous crime."

"I can't believe that a man of his age would commit such a horrible and inhuman crime," said the mother.

She said there was no hostility between the two families, and the suspect always treated her child in a nice way.

"He always asked my son to run him some errands," the woman said. "Only half-an-hour before Lo'ai disappeared, Abu Ziad had asked him to take out garbage."

The suspect's family left the neighbourhood after he

was arrested and no one knows their whereabouts, the woman said.

Brig. Ouran told the press conference that police traced the child's movements on that day, and concluded that M.A.T. was the main suspect, the Jordan News Agency reported.

Brig. Ouran said police put the suspect under surveillance and discovered that he had applied for and received a new passport and had issued a power of attorney to one of his brothers to act on his behalf in legal matters in his absence, meaning he planned to travel.

The man was arrested Monday, the police officer said. "After initial denials, the man confessed to the crime and also reenacted the crime."

The mother of the child said she hoped that the suspect will be convicted and executed.

"I am not going to accept any compromise and we are not looking for revenge because we believe that the law will take its course," she said.

Israel and PLO apart

(Continued from page 1)

dozens of worshippers at Hebron's Ibrahim Mosque.

Mr. Arafat, in a Belgian newspaper interview, urged the rapid application of a U.N. Security Council decision over the protection of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Mr. Arafat told Le Soir the Palestinians planned to talk with the United States and Russia, co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, Europe and others on how to put the resolution into force on the ground.

"And the earlier the better," he said.

He said an international protection force had to be negotiated with Israel, Russia and the U.S. It should be "lightly armed," he said.

Mr. Arafat had talks with Russian President Boris Yeltsin's special representative on

Sunday. U.S. chief Middle East peace negotiator Dennis Rose was due in Tunis on Monday.

Mr. Arafat also called for rapid talks on the future of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.

"...do not let us wait unnecessarily for the start of the third year of the process undertaken in Washington. No one seriously thinks the Jewish settlers will leave the occupied territories in a week or in a month. This question must be discussed without delay."

He said settlers should leave the city centre of Hebron.

"They could be moved to Kyriat Arba, the settlement located at the entry of Hebron. An explosion (of violence) must be prevented," he said.

Mr. Arafat had summoned the 12 remaining members of the Executive Committee to a meeting in Tunis.



DELIGHT: An Israeli soldier enjoys the way his colleagues launch tear-gas at Palestinians protesters in Bethlehem's Manger Square (AFP photo)

Security concerns behind ban on 'The Terrorist,' official says

By P. V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Concerns over extremist reaction had prompted the authorities to suspend the screening of an Egyptian movie, "The Terrorist," in Jordan and the censorship board will review the affair before taking a final decision, Information Minister Jawad Anani said Monday.

The government-appointed film censorship council announced late Sunday that it had ordered a ban on the movie, which stars the highly popular Egyptian actor Adel Imam, on grounds that it was incompatible with Jordanian censorship regulations.

The film has come under strong criticism by local columnists. Activists of the powerful Muslim Brotherhood charged that it damages the image of Islam.

The film takes a page from contemporary events in Egypt, which is wracked by militant Islamic groups seeking to overthrow the secular government of President Hosni Mubarak and install a puritan Islamic regime.

The movie depicts an innocent and devout Muslim villager in Cairo recruited by an extremist group and asked to carry out attacks. The villager, played by Imam, believes the whole society is against Islamic teachings and attacks video shops, tourist buses and a jewelry store.

Escaping from an attack he is hit and injured in an accident involving a car driven by a young woman who takes him home and nurses him, gradually convincing him to reconsider his beliefs before he meets his end at the hands of other members of his group.

In essence, it seeks to depict militant Islamic leaders as opportunists who interpret Islamic teachings the way that suits them with little regard for human life or culture.

Mr. Jaber said he had only read columns critical of the movie in the local press and he wanted to see the film for

himself but decided against it since he felt that "it would not be right on my part to do so."

"The film had a purpose to serve in Egypt, given the confrontation between the regime and some Islamic groups," Mr. Jaber said. "But it has no purpose to serve in Jordan, where there is no such problem and the political system is very much streamlined."

A local columnist commented: "The aim of the movie is to damage Egypt's Islamic groups by portraying its members as drunkards, thieves, traitors and womanisers."

Hanzeh Mansour, spokesman for the IAF bloc in parliament, was quoted as saying by the Associated Press that the film was produced upon the instigation of a "neighbouring Arab government."

Imam, the star of the movie, has taken a stoic stand against Muslim extremists in Egypt, particularly their belief that mainstream cinema and arts are against Islamic teachings.

Authorities in the north Lebanese town of Tripoli, a stronghold of that country's Muslim Brotherhood, banned the movie after a local leader complained that it tarnished the image of Islam.

Many Jordanians who saw the movie were of the opinion that the movie had neither a convincing theme with credibility nor any artistic value.

"It is as if the Egyptian government itself produced the film with the sole aim of discrediting and tarnishing the image of Islamic groups in the country," said a young Jordanian who described himself as a secular Muslim.

"It underestimates the intelligence of viewers," she added.

The ban on the film is also applicable to its video cassette versions, which have yet to hit the market.

Israeli troops kill blind Gazan

(Continued from page 1)

warned security officials to be on alert from extremist acts by Jews at the mosque, a government source confirmed Monday.

The report came in the third week of an independent state inquiry into the massacre and followed testimony from army officials that they were not prepared for an act of terror by

Jewish settlers even though there had been frequent clashes and constant tension.

The report, initially published in the Labour Party daily Davar, said Mr. Rabin was told about tension between settlers and Arabs in Hebron and incidents of acid being poured on Muslim prayer rugs in the area.

A government source who demanded anonymity quoted Mr. Rabin as telling a closed meeting of military and security officials that they had to take measures to prepare for the possibility of Jewish extremist attacks.

Davar quoted Mr. Rabin as saying Jewish extremists sought to sabotage the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord and might choose a religious site to "raise a religious conflict."

Despite Mr. Rabin's urging preventative steps, former Geo. Moshe Yaaloo, who retired as army commander in the West Bank shortly before

the massacre, said Monday there were no contingency plans to deal with the possibility of a terror attack carried out by Jewish extremists.

"Something like this was not expected, we do not publish instructions and do not outline scenarios and reactions regarding things that are not expected," he said.

Gen. Yaalon also contradicted testimony by paramilitary border police and a junior army officer that there were orders forbidding soldiers from shooting at Jewish settlers under any circumstances. He told the five-judge commission that he would have shot Goldstein to prevent the killing of Muslim worshippers.

"During disturbances, there is a total ban on opening fire (on Jews)," he said, but added "any soldier who sees someone carrying out a crime must intervene to stop it, including with fire if necessary."

Ben Ali reelected

(Continued from page 1)

neighbouring Algeria that nearly brought fundamentalists to power.

Tunisia's fundamentalist movement, Al Nahda, was never officially recognised as a political party, but fielded nominally independent candidates who won 13 per cent of the votes in 1989. Al Nahda was outlawed in 1991, and its leaders are in jail or exile.

On Friday, about 100 Tunisian intellectuals issued a declaration demanding revision of the election code to encourage others to run for president.

A total of 625 candidates vied for parliamentary seats, though only the Democratic Constitutional Assembly was competing in all 144 districts.

The opposition parties failed to form a common front, and experts expected them to post few if any outright victories.

All the opposition parties, as well as major trade unions, endorsed Mr. Ben Ali.

Parliament ends session today

(Continued from page 1)

behalf of Iraq.

During Monday's session, the government answered several questions raised by deputies concerning services in their districts.

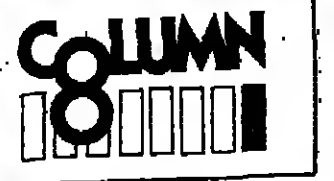
Deputy Abdul Karim Dughmi said he reserved his right to officially interpellate the government concerning the legality of licensing security companies offering security services.

Mr. Dughmi (Mafraq) charged that such companies abuse the authority given to

them by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in a manner that "threatens our security and safety" and get paid for it.

The deputy asserted that it was no coincidence that his car was damaged and Deputy Habashme's was stolen after the two legislators publicly criticised security service companies.

The two lawmakers are demanding that licenses issued to the private security firms be withdrawn and government forces undertake the responsibility of providing security wherever needed.



Suspicious hole near U.K. palace sparks alert

LONDON (R) — Anti-terrorist officers were called to investigate a suspicious hole in the ground near Queen Elizabeth's Windsor Castle but found no evidence to suggest it was a mortar bomb launch site, British police said Monday. A 30 local resident spotted the hole (76-cm-deep) hole five days ago on an island in the River Thames less than one mile (around one km) from the royal palace west of London. The three foot-square (0.9 metre-square) hole raised police suspicions because it was carefully dug and about the size to house mortars of the kind used in a recent series of Irish Republican Army attacks on London's Heathrow Airport. But police said they found no evidence of any guerrilla activity. "Nothing was found to link this hole with the IRA or any other terrorist group, but in the current climate of attacks on Heathrow Airport, we cannot take any chances," said Inspector Jim Jones of the Thames Valley Police. "Putting it plainly, we do not know if this hole was dug deliberately as a site to fire missiles at Windsor Castle, or whether it was a prank." A spokesman for London's Scotland Yard Police Headquarters, which coordinates anti-guerrilla operations, dismissed the find as "completely insignificant."

Woman in military sex scandal denies she was a spy

LONDON (R) — A woman whose kiss-and-tell revelations forced the resignation of Britain's top military officer denied that she was an Iraqi agent, saying she was far too indiscreet to be a spy. Sixty-year-old Sir Peter Harding quit as chief of the British defence staff a week ago when his Spanish-born ex-lover Lady Bienvendita Buck told a Sunday newspaper of their reportedly torrid extra-marital affair. Lady Buck, the former wife of a Conservative politician, gave a second interview to the same tabloid, the News Of The World, in which she laughed off reports she was enlisted by a cousin of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to steal military secrets. "If I am a spy then I am a very bad one," she was quoted as saying. "I must be the first spy so intent on secrecy she tells her story to the News Of The World." Lady Buck also went into graphic details of her love life. Saying she conceived Sir Peter's baby during raunchy sex sessions but had the child aborted without telling him she was pregnant, Sir Peter, an ex-fighter pilot who is married with four children, quit when newspapers showed him kissing Lady Buck, who gives her age as 32 but has been reported to be nearer 37.

China keeps low birth rate in 1993

BEIJING (R) — China held its birth rate at 19 per 1,000 last year despite a high number of women of child-bearing age but it must continue strict population control policies, its top family planning official said. The People's Daily Monday quoted Peng Peiyun, minister of family planning, as saying last year's good results should not cause complacency. "Each year the number of new babies is equal to the population of Australia and New Zealand put together," she told a National Family Planning Conference. "We must recognise the extreme difficulty of continuing family planning policies and continue them over the long term," said Ms. Peng, a mother of four. Under China's tough family planning laws, launched at the beginning of the 1980s, urban families are restricted to one child and those to rural areas to two. China's population was 1.1857 billion at the end of 1993, a net increase of 13.46 million, the People's Daily said. In 1993, more than 121 million women were in the 20-29 age group, only 1.13 million short of the peak in 1992, Ms. Peng said. Last year's natural growth rate was the lowest since 1961 when millions died of starvation during the failed experiment of the great leap forward. Government figures show. Statistics show the birth rate in some regions was lower than 15 per cent.